Shojo Beat Manga

BABY & Me

Story & Art by

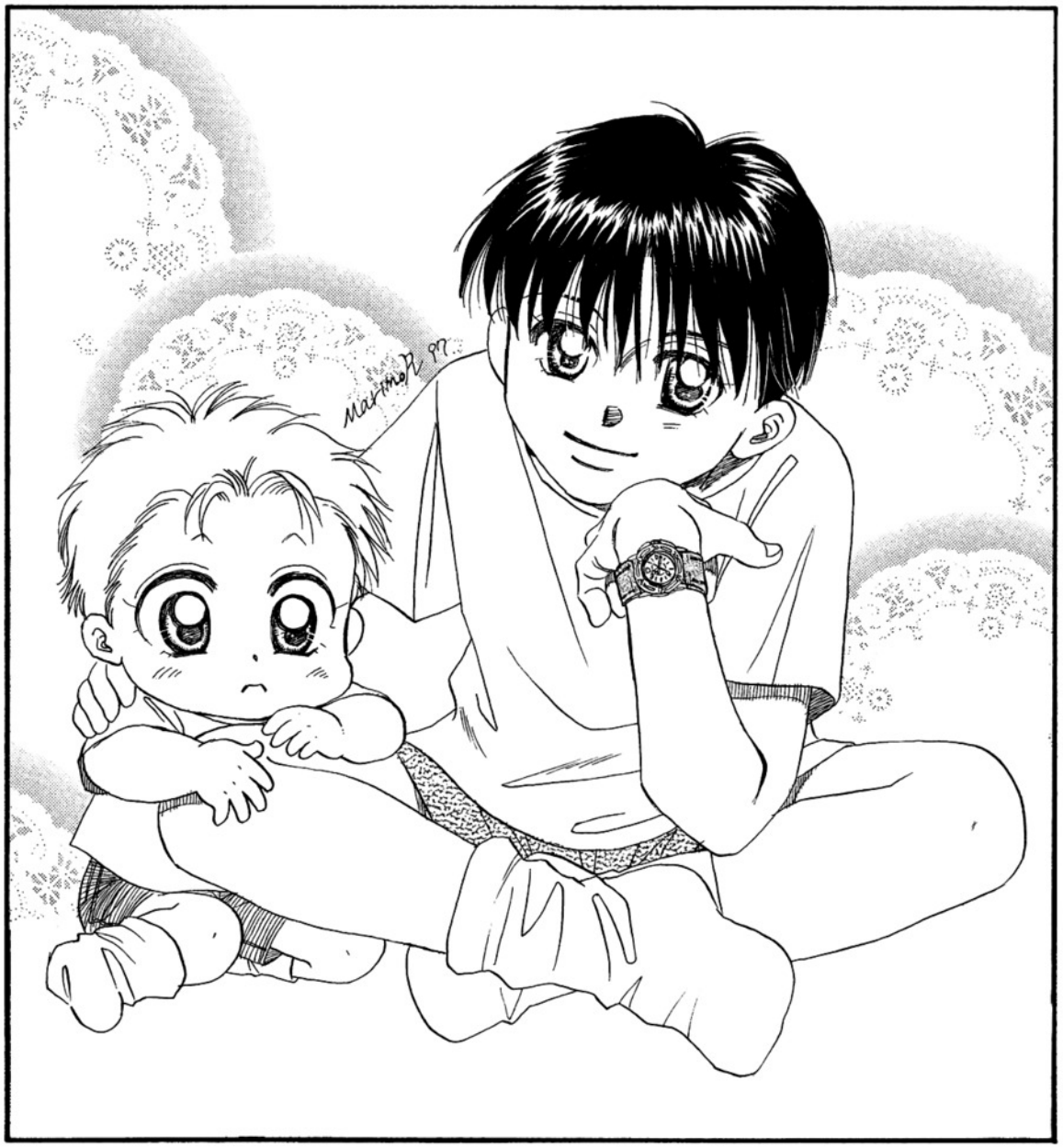
Marimo Ragawa

16

Shojo Beat

BABY & Me

Vol. 16



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BABY & ME Table of Contents

Chapter 86	6
Chapter 87	39
Chapter 88	71
Chapter 89	101
Chapter 90	125
Chapter 91	155

BABY & ME, Vol. 16

The Shojo Beat Manga Edition

Story & Art by

MARIMO RAGAWA

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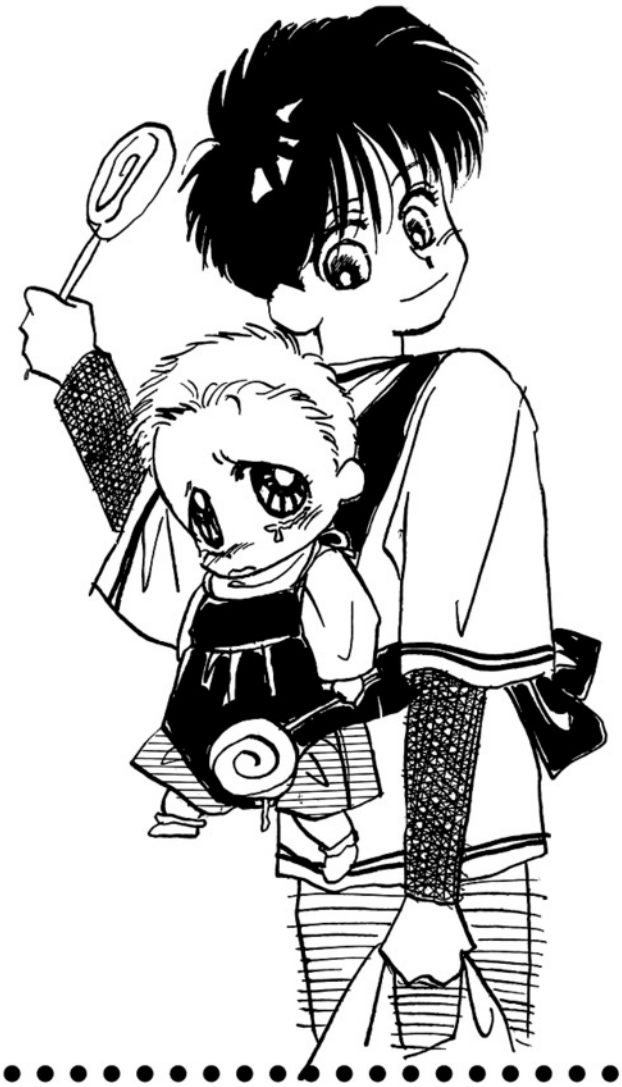


BABY & ME

Creator: Marimo Ragawa

SBM Title: *Baby & Me*

Date of Birth: September 21

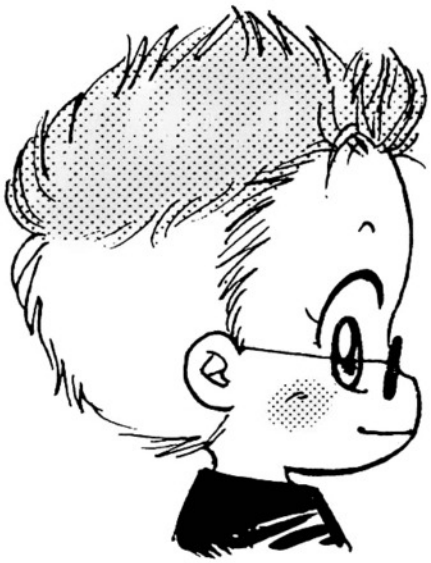
Blood Type: B

Major Works: *Time Limit*, *Baby & Me*, *N.Y. N.Y.*, and *Shanimuni—Go* (Desperately—Go)

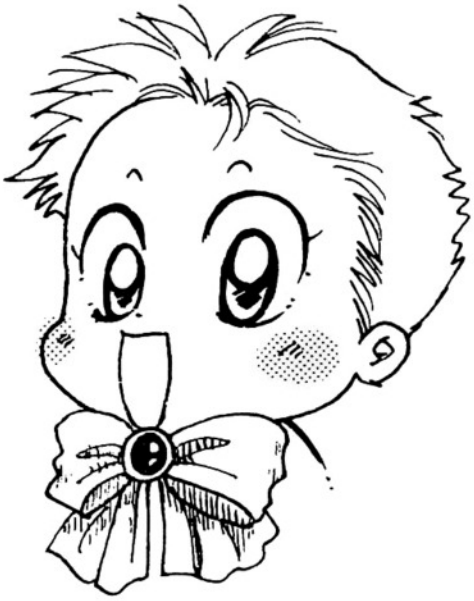
Marimo Ragawa first started submitting manga to a comic magazine when she was 12 years old. She kept up her submissions for four years, but to no avail. She decided to submit her work to the magazine *Hana to Yume*, where she received Top Prize in the Monthly Manga Contest as well as an honorable mention (Kasaku) in the magazine's Big Challenge contest. Her first manga was titled *Time Limit*. *Baby & Me* was honored with a Shogakukan Manga Award in 1995 and was spun off into an anime.

Ragawa's work showcases some very cute and expressive line work along with an incredible ability to depict complex emotions and relationships. Some of her other works include *N.Y. N.Y.* and the tennis manga *Shanimuni—Go*.

Ragawa has two brothers and two sisters.

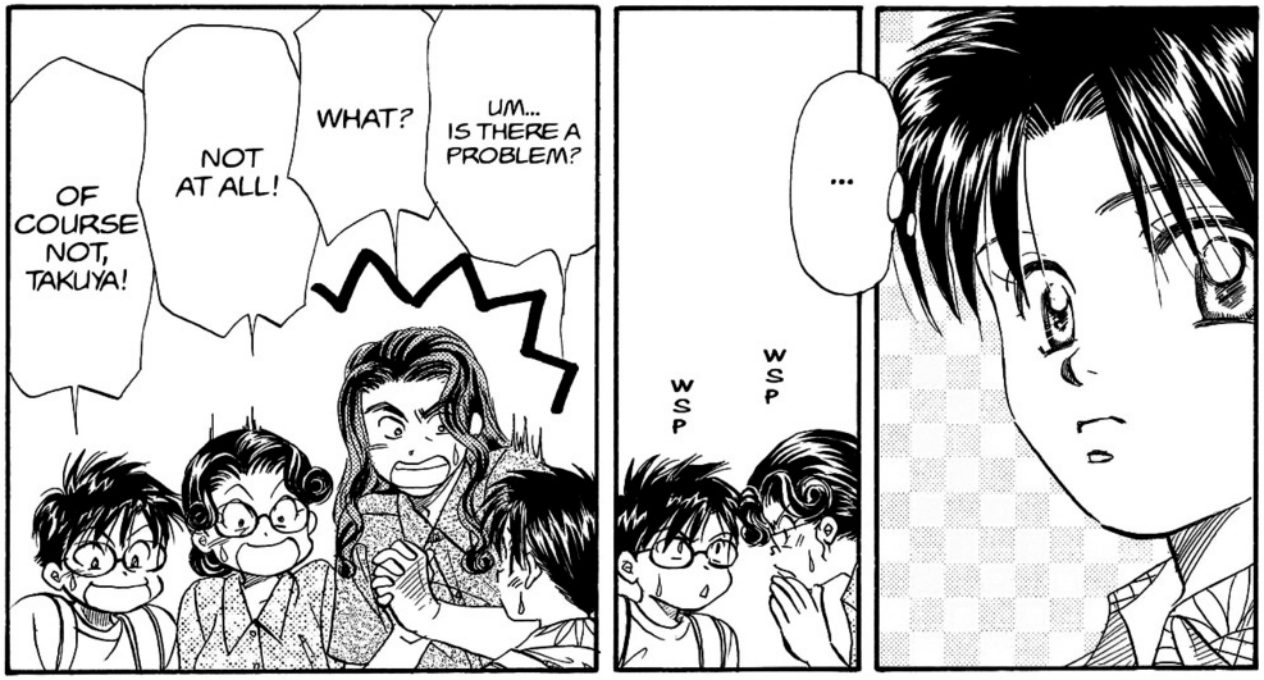


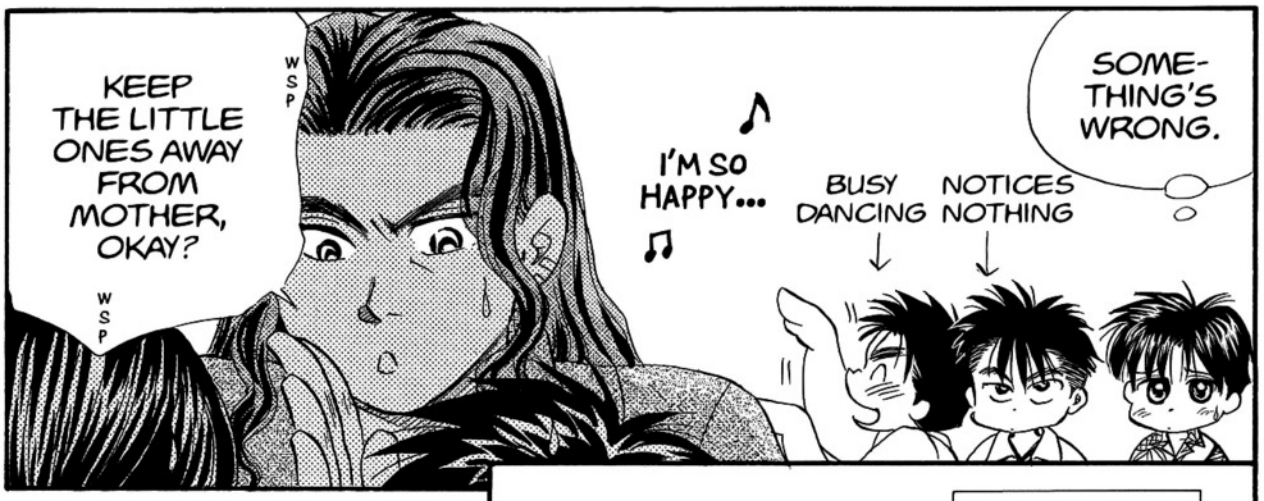
BABY & Me
Chapter 86
BANG
Hasta la vista Baby!!

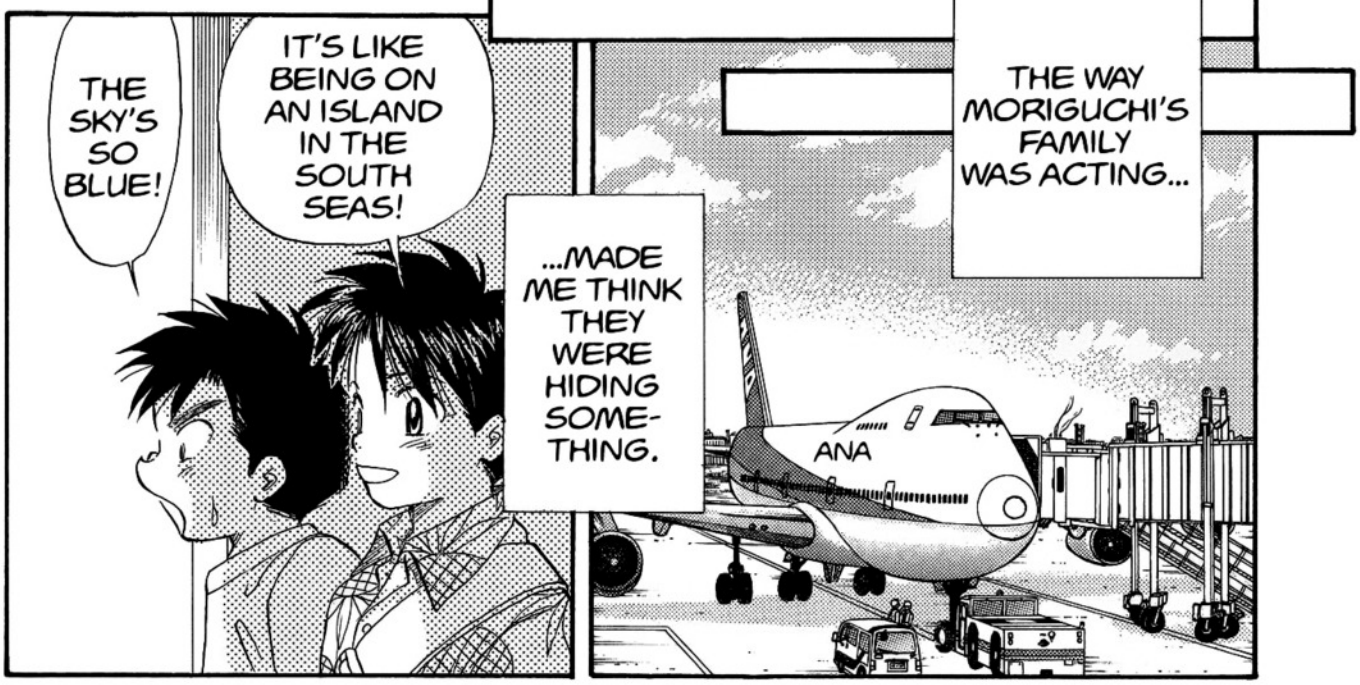


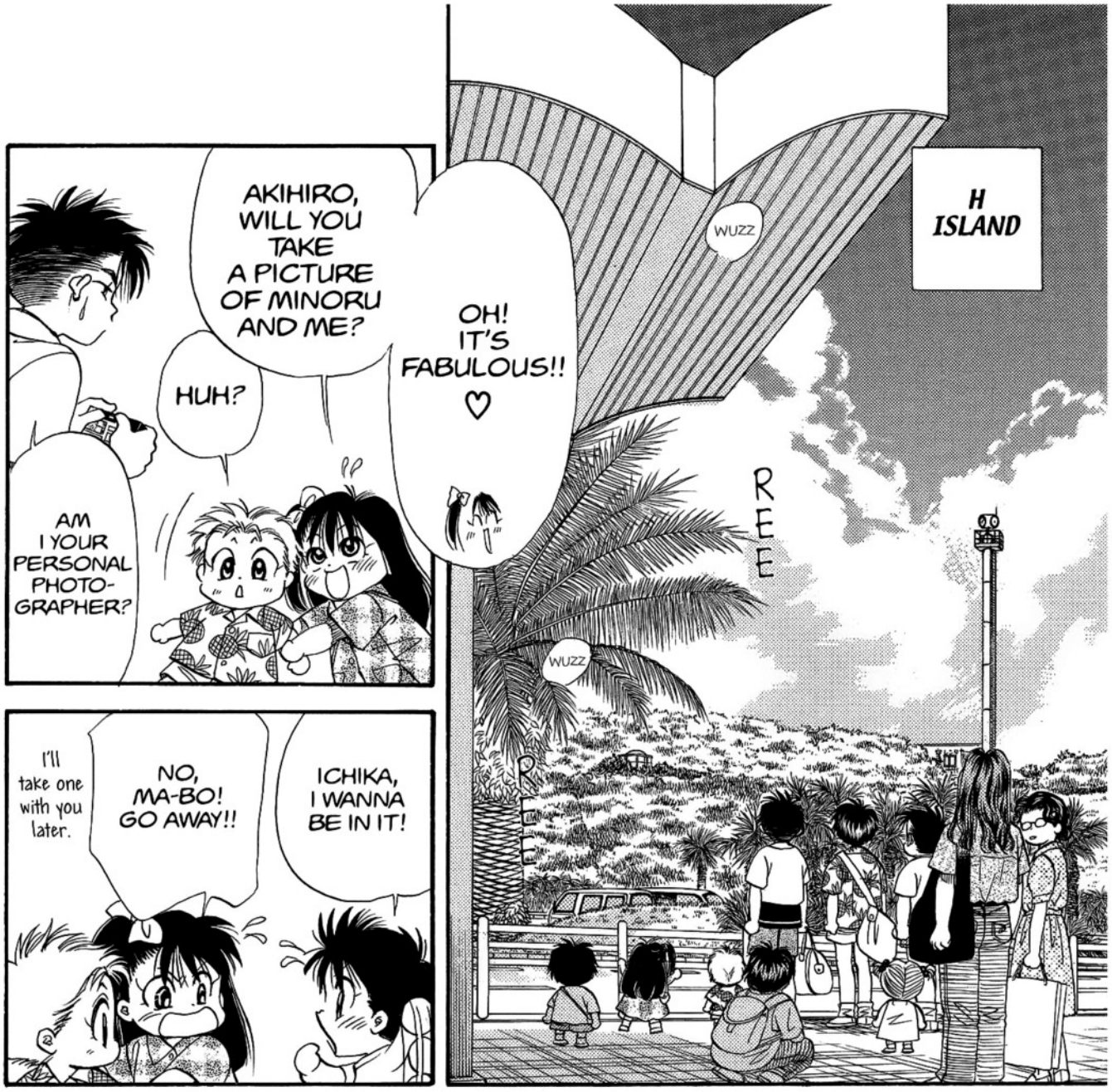
SUMMER VACATION WAS ABOUT TO BEGIN.
HUH?
AN INN?
WUZZ
TAKUYA! IT'S BY THE OCEAN!
WE'LL HAVE TO PAY FOR TRANSPORTATION, BUT SHE'LL GIVE US A DISCOUNT ON ROOM AND BOARD. WANNA COME?
IT'S RIGHT BY THE BEACH. MY AUNT RUNS IT IN THE SUMMER.
YEAH.
...DECIDED TO GO TO THE BEACH WITH MORIGUCHI.
AKIHIRO!
HUH?
...AND FUJII AND I...
SO GON ...
OKAY, I'LL ASK MY DAD.
WHY NOT? MORIGUCHI'S PARENTS WILL BE THERE, RIGHT? I'M GONNA ASK MY MOM IF I CAN GO.
SOUNDS LIKE FUN!

...FOR INVITING US!
THANK YOU...
WITH THE THREE OF US TOGETHER...
ALOHA SHIRT
BONUSES
SANK YOU!
YEAH.
REE
REE
AND, OF COURSE, THERE WERE BONUSES ATTACHED.
HITOSHI!
DIDN'T I TELL YOU NO LITTLE KIDS?
I COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO TELL THEM!
HA HA HA... WE'RE GLAD YOU COULD ALL COME ALONG.
...SUMMER VACATION HAD BEGUN.
FUMIKO, MORIGUCHI'S MOM
HIROSHI, MORIGUCHI'S DAD


UM... IS THERE A PROBLEM?
WHAT?
NOT AT ALL!
OF COURSE NOT, TAKUYA!
...
WSP
WSP

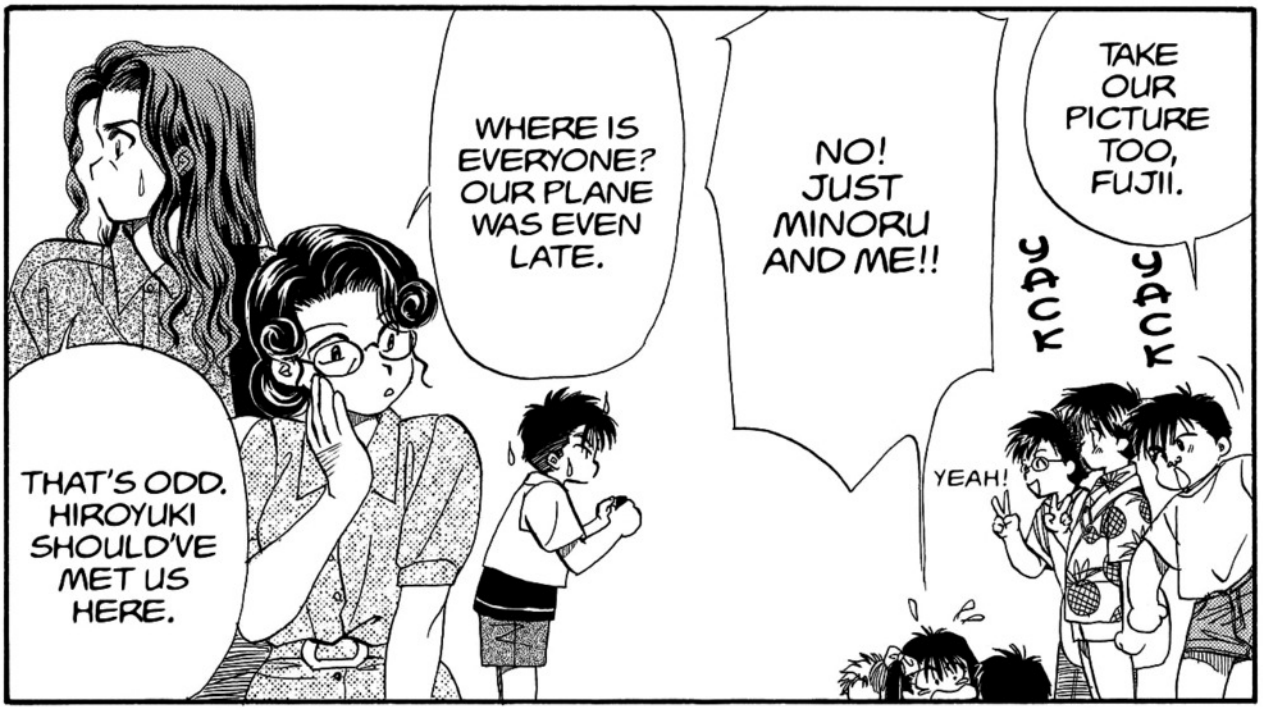

SOME-THING'S WRONG.
NOTICES NOTHING
BUSY DANCING
I'M SO HAPPY...
KEEP THE LITTLE ONES AWAY FROM MOTHER, OKAY?
WSP
WSP


THE WAY MORIGUCHI'S FAMILY WAS ACTING...
ANA
...MADE ME THINK THEY WERE HIDING SOME-THING.
IT'S LIKE BEING ON AN ISLAND IN THE SOUTH SEAS!
THE SKY'S SO BLUE!


H ISLAND
WUZZ
WUZZ
REE
AKIHIRO, WILL YOU TAKE A PICTURE OF MINORU AND ME?
HUH?
OH! IT'S FABULOUS!! ♡
AM I YOUR PERSONAL PHOTO-GRAPHER?
I'll take one with you later.
NO, MA-BO! GO AWAY!!
ICHIKA, I WANNA BE IN IT!

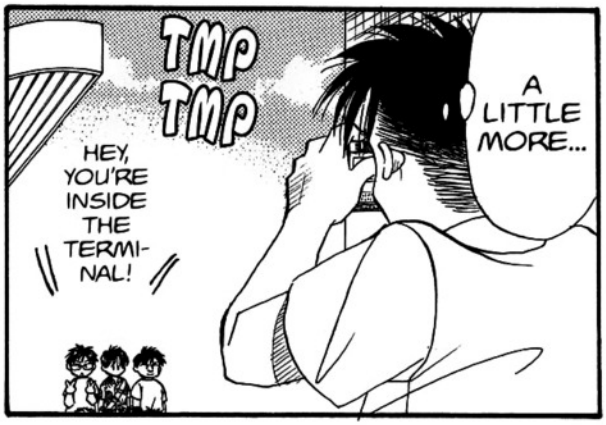
BACK OFF, HIRO!!
DUMMY! UGLY!
CAN I TAKE THE PICTURE ALREADY?
WHAM
WHAM

...
HUH?
WHUP
UGH!!

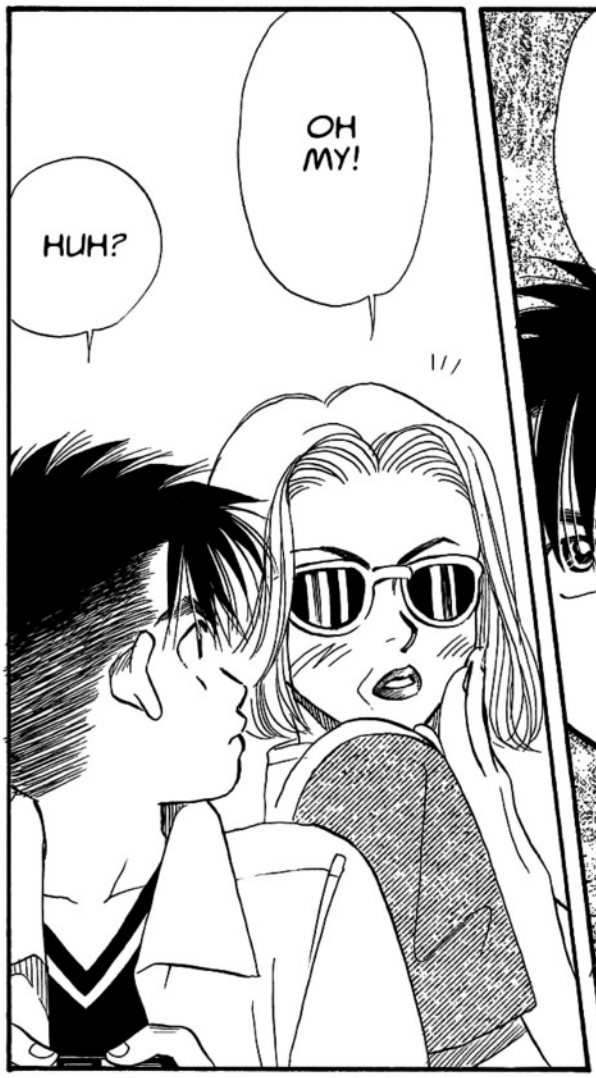

TAKE OUR PICTURE TOO, FUJII.
YACK
YACK
NO! JUST MINORU AND ME!!
YEAH!
WHERE IS EVERYONE? OUR PLANE WAS EVEN LATE.
THAT'S ODD. HIROYUKI SHOULD'VE MET US HERE.

YACK
YACK
HMM...

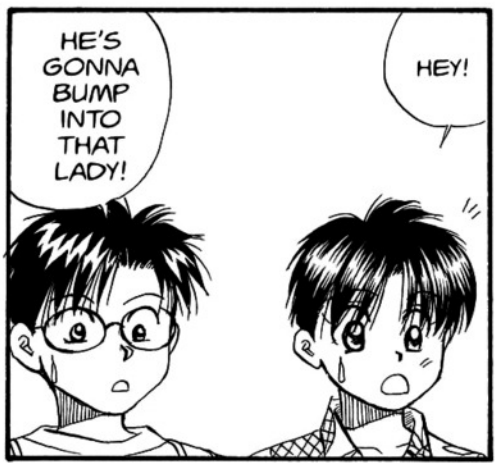
TMP TMP TMP
I'LL STEP BACK.

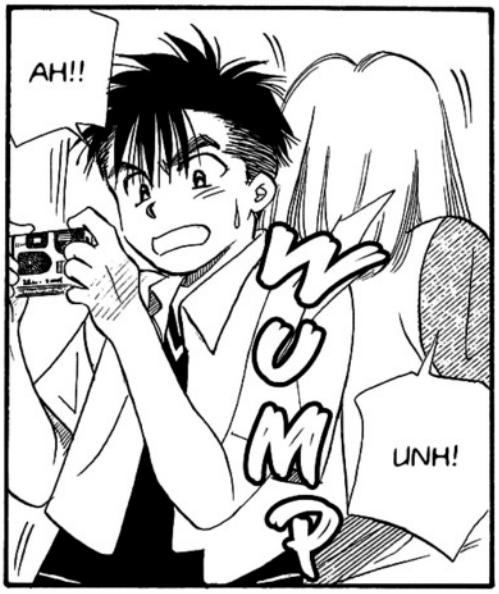

TMP TMP
HEY, YOU'RE INSIDE THE TERMI-NAL!
A LITTLE MORE...

DISPOS-ABLE CAMERAS DON'T HAVE ZOOM LENSES.
THEY WON'T ALL FIT IN THE FRAME.


HUH?
OH MY!

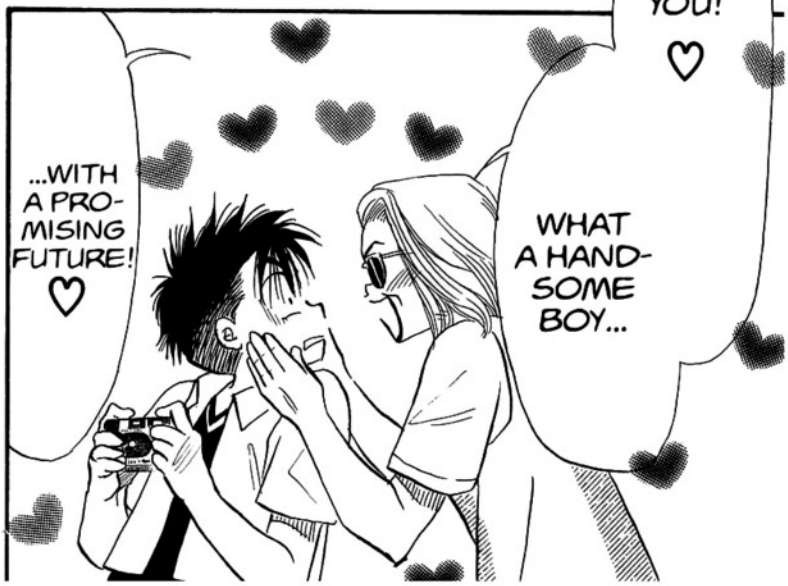
OH, I'M SORRY.


HE'S GONNA BUMP INTO THAT LADY!
HEY!

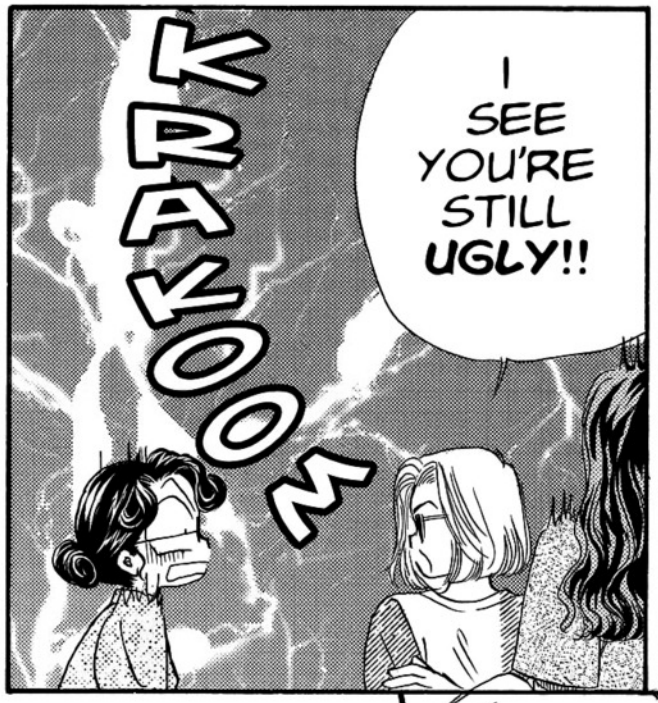

AH!!
BUMP
UNH!

HUH?
DON'T YOU MEAN "MISS"?
EXCUSE ME! LET GO OF ME, MA'AM!!

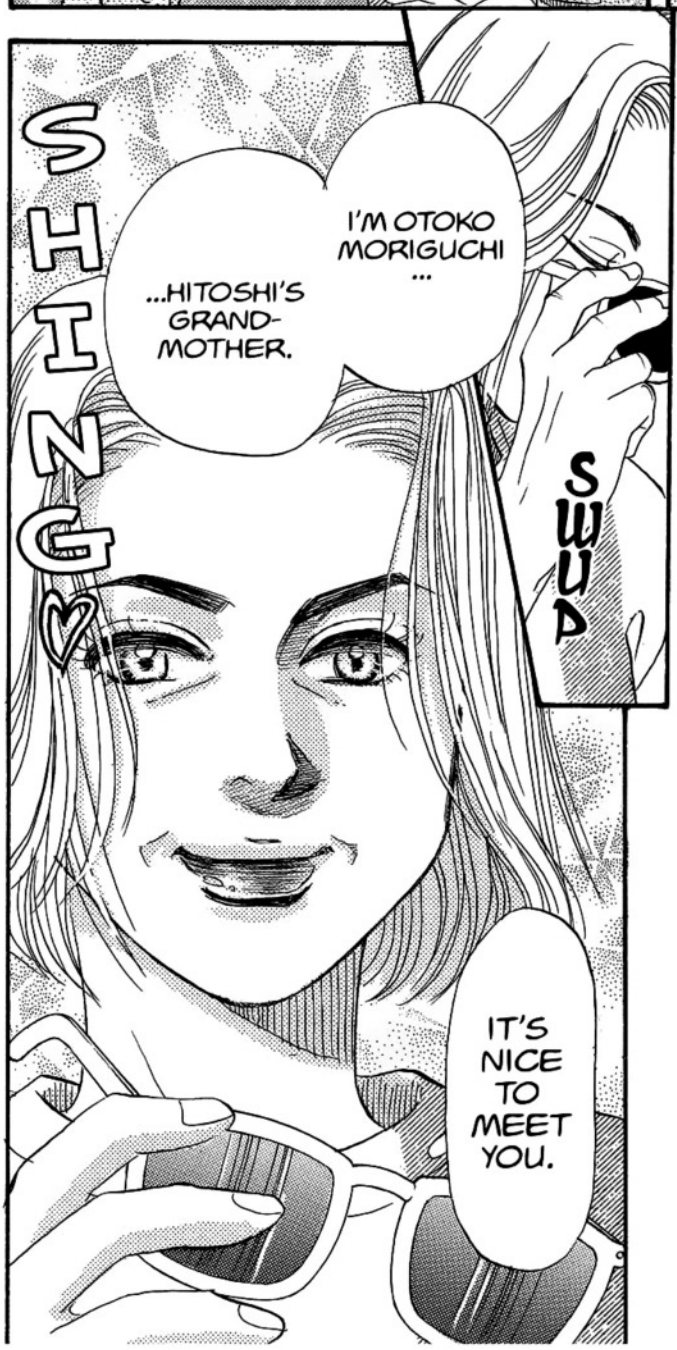
HEY! OUCH!
SWUP


WELL! LOOK AT YOU! ♡
WHAT A HAND-SOME BOY...
...WITH A PRO-MISING FUTURE! ♡

MOM!!
HUH?
M...
THAT'S MY GRANDMA.
THAT'S RIGHT.
It's been so long. I didn't recognize her.
YOUR DAD CALLED HER "MOM."
HITOSHI ...
WHAT IS THAT?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? STOP HARASSING HITOSHI'S FRIEND!!
HIROSHI! I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU!
H-HELLO, MOTHER. IT'S SO NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN. I'M FUMIKO, YOUR DAUGHTER-IN-LAW.
YES.
SO I CAME TO PICK YOU UP. IS THAT A PROBLEM?
HIROYUKI'S WORKING.
HEE HEE HEE
I DON'T WANNA TALK ABOUT IT! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE ANYWAY? WHERE'S HIROYUKI?
I DON'T APPROVE.
HIROSHI, YOU LOOK MORE LIKE A WOMAN THAN EVER.
I gave birth to a handsome boy.


I SEE YOU'RE STILL UGLY!!
KRAKOOM

THANK YOU FOR HAVING US.
SHING


I'M OTOKO MORIGUCHI ...
...HITOSHI'S GRAND-MOTHER.
SWUP
SHING

AH, HITOSHI, THERE YOU ARE!
FUMIKO, TRY TO BE PATIENT!!
I...I CAN'T BREATHE!!
WEEN
WEEN

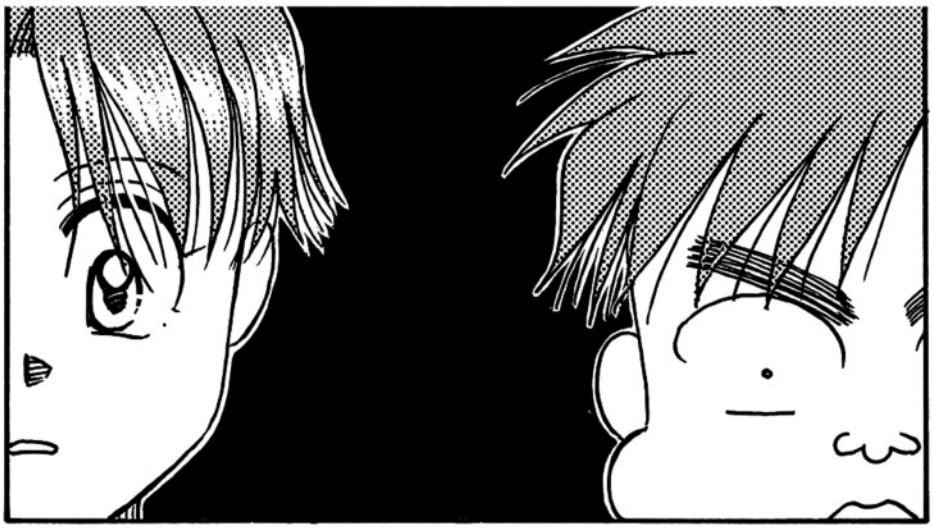
I'M TAKUYA ENOKI. NICE TO MEET YOU.
I'M TADASHI GOTOH.
GRAND-MA, THESE ARE MY FRIENDS.
SUCH POLITE BOYS...

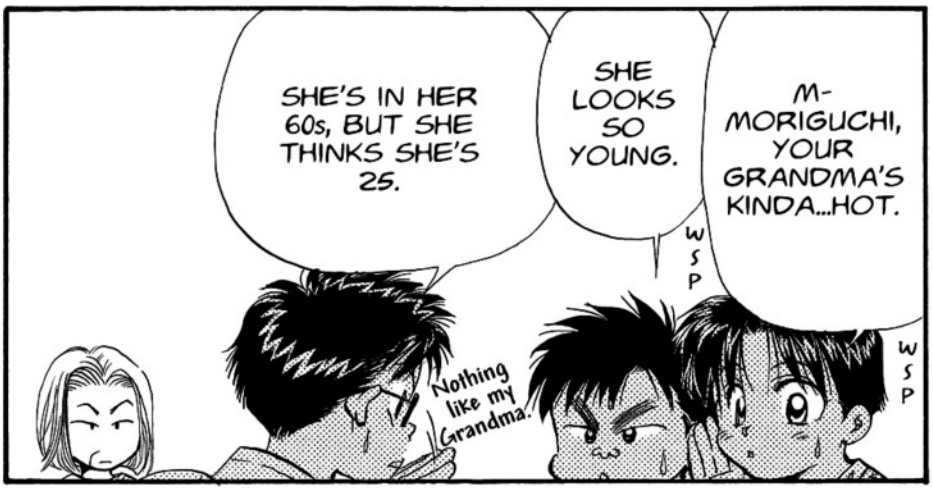
IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU.

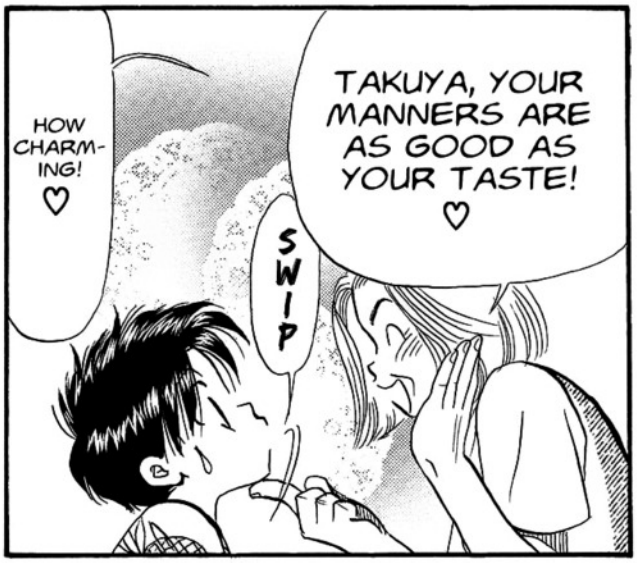
Author's Note Part 1

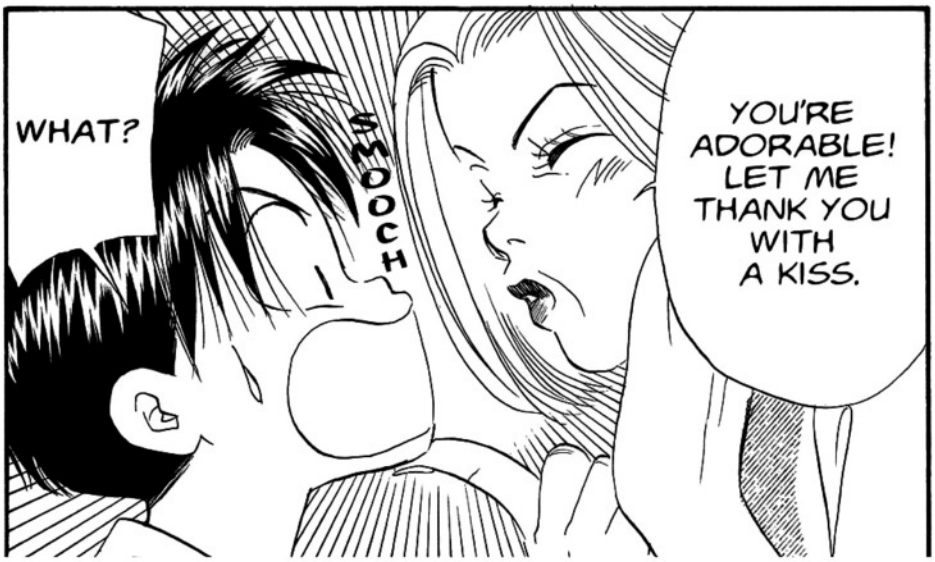
Ciao! Marimo Ragawa here. This is volume 16 of Baby & Me. Time really does fly. It seems like just yesterday we were working on volume 10. Unbelievable. As a manga artist, sometimes I feel like I'm stuck in a time warp. I often find myself writing the wrong year when I sign autographs and illustrations. The people around me change, but Iseem to stay the same. I haven't changed my makeup or clothing style for years. When I realized that, I was embarrassed. That's it! It's time for me to become a grown woman!

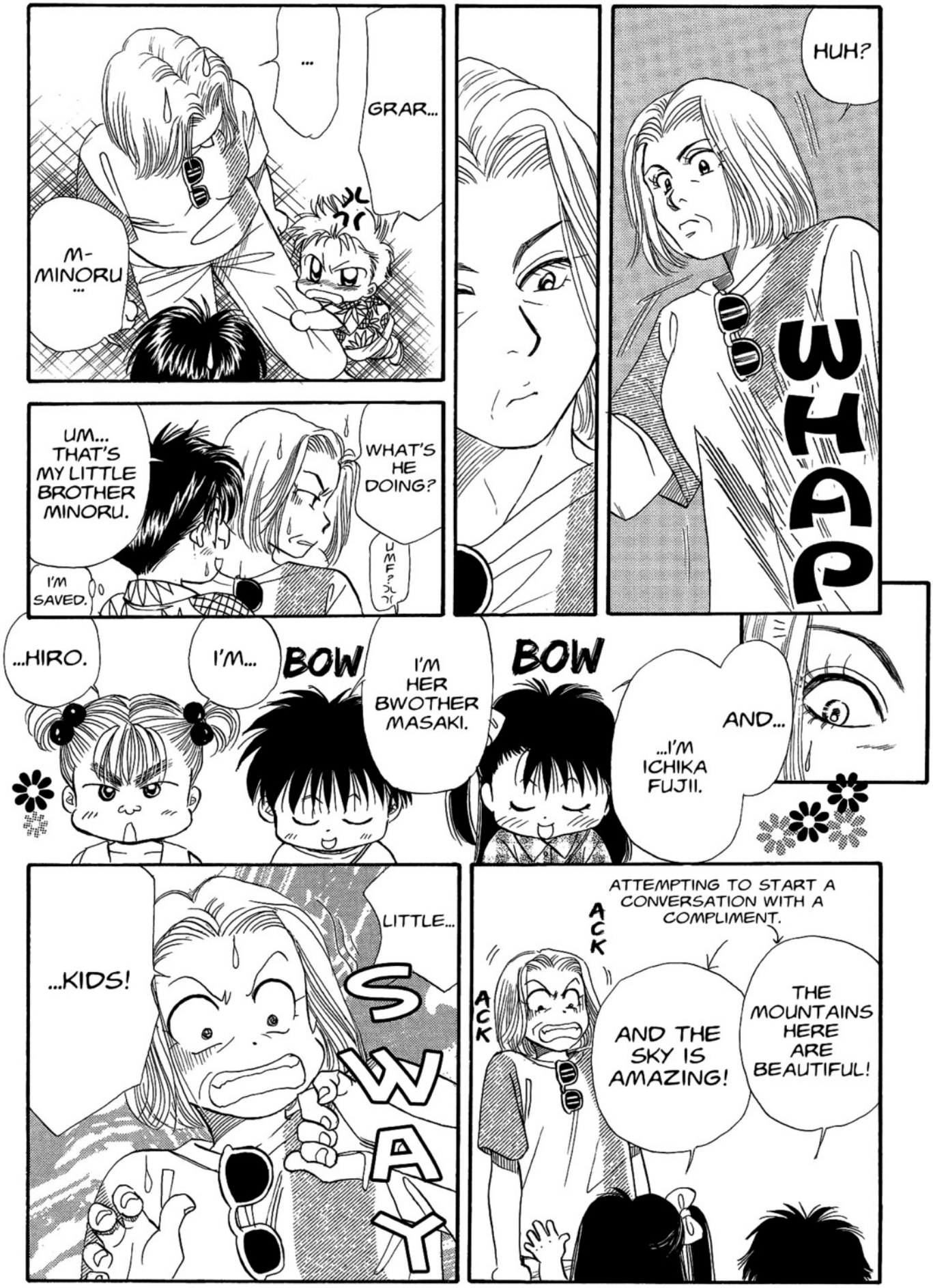
The complaint of someone in her 20s... I haven't matured much either.



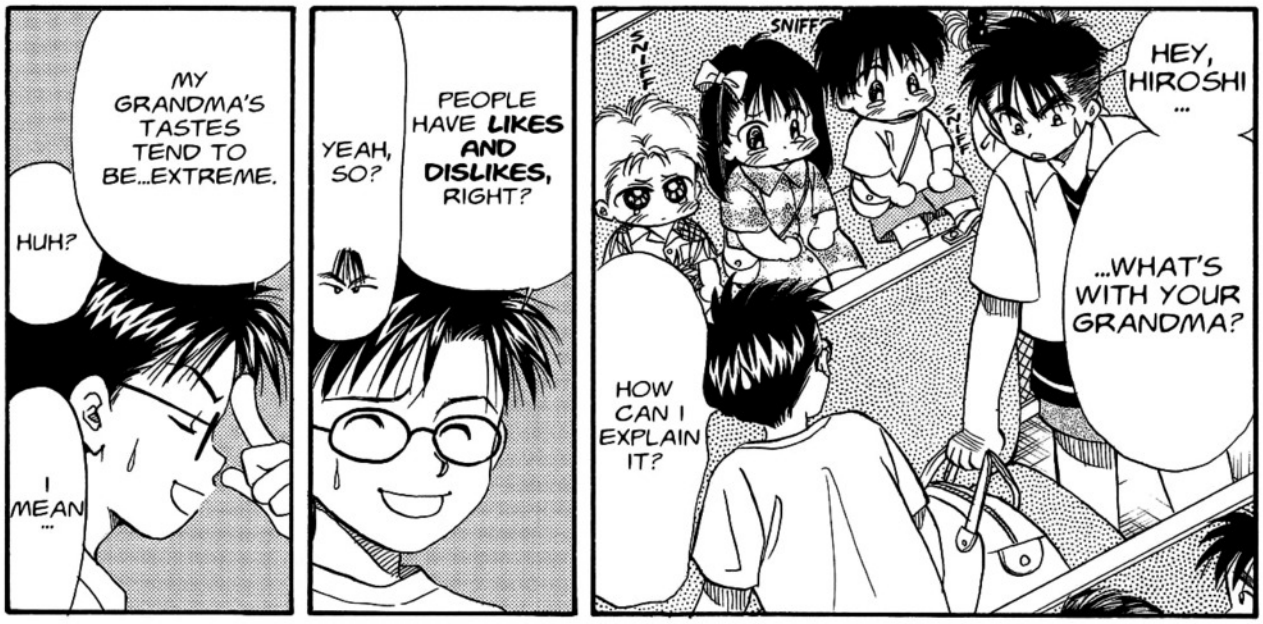


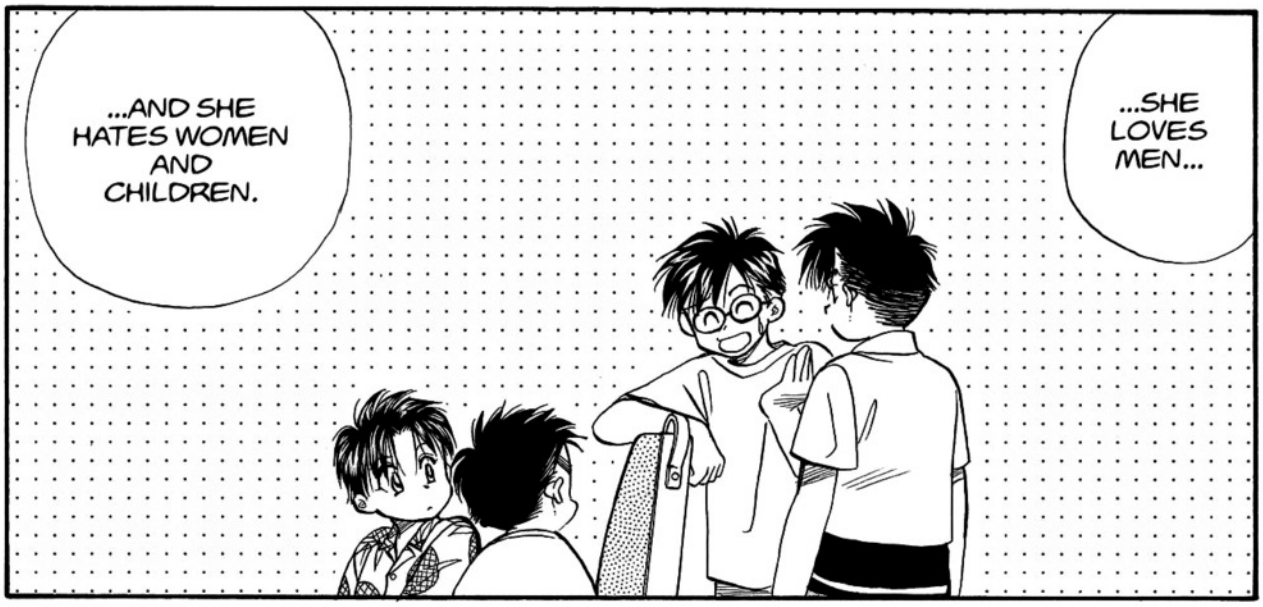


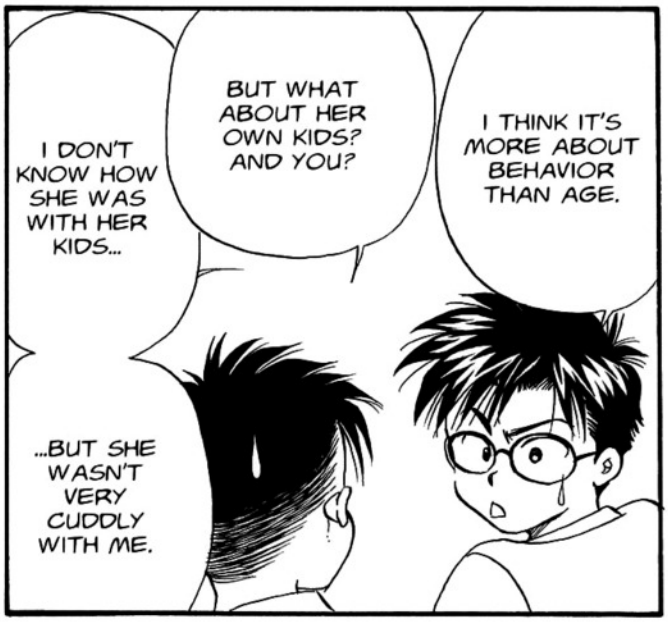


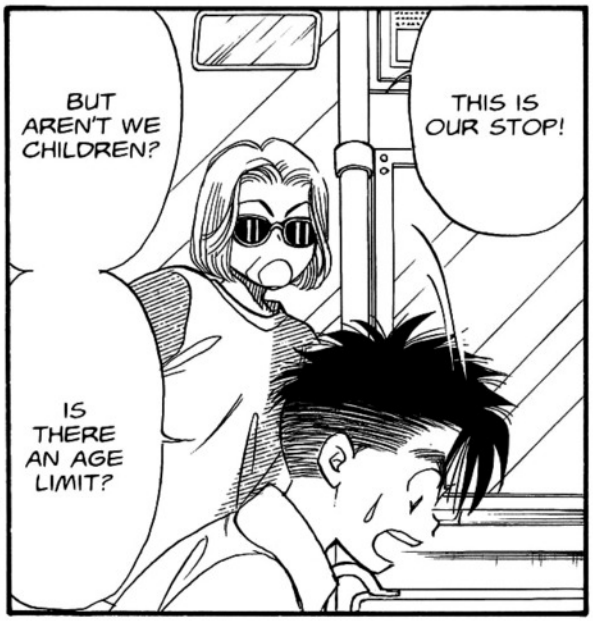

...
GRAR...
M-MINORU ...
HUH?
WHAP
UM... THAT'S MY LITTLE BROTHER MINORU.
WHAT'S HE DOING?
UMF?
I'M SAVED.
...HIRO.
I'M...
BOW
I'M HER BWOTHER MASAKI.
BOW
AND...
...I'M ICHIKA FUJII.
LITTLE...
...KIDS!
SWAY
ATTEMPTING TO START A CONVERSATION WITH A COMPLIMENT.
ACK
ACK
AND THE SKY IS AMAZING!
THE MOUNTAINS HERE ARE BEAUTIFUL!

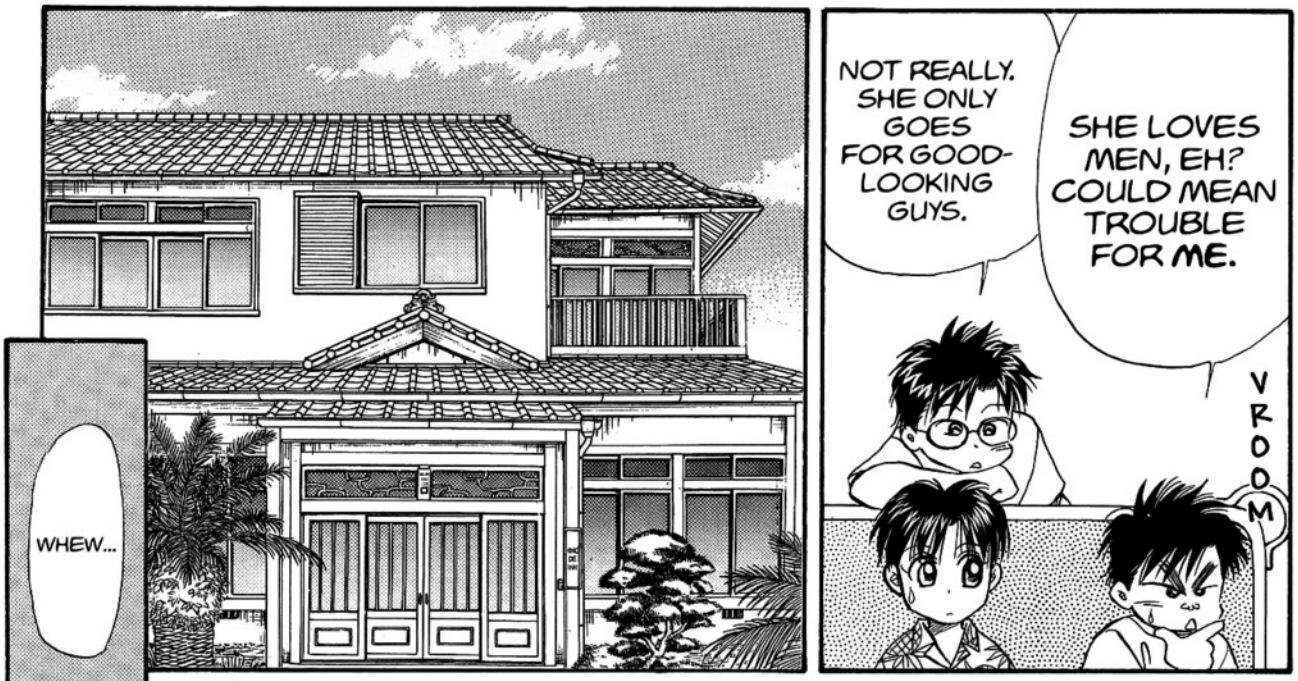
EEK!!
PLEASE CALM DOWN, GRANNY.
DIS WON'T WORK IF YOU'RE SO ANGRY.
OH.
PAT
PAT
GEEZ...CAN'T YOU AT LEAST TRY TO LIKE CHILDREN FOR ONCE?
WAIT A MINUTE, HIROSHI! YOU NEVER TOLD US YOU HAD FOUR TODDLERS WITH YOU!!
HUFF
HUFF
WHAT'S THAT FOR?
SHE HAS A WHIP.
...YOU SMELLY PESTS!
DON'T COME NEAR ME...
WHUP
KRAK
OH!!
EEEEK
HIRO
THE LITTLE ONES HAVE TO SIT IN THE REAR OF THE BUS.
AND KEEP THEM AWAY FROM ME.

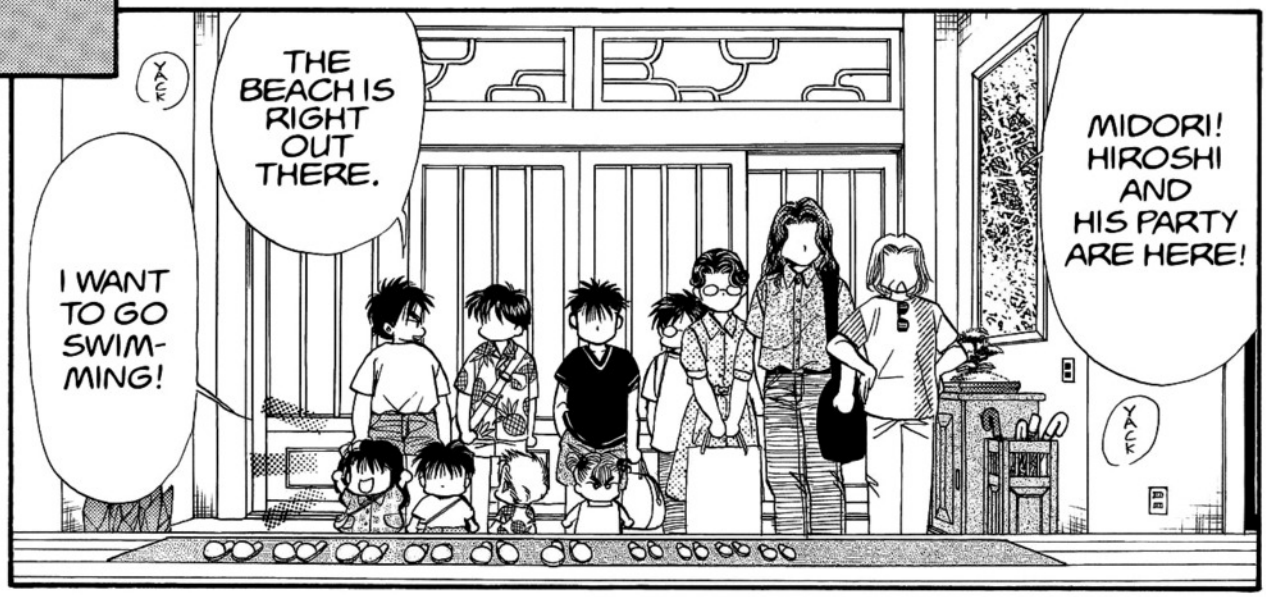

MY GRANDMA'S TASTES TEND TO BE...EXTREME.
HUH?
I MEAN...
PEOPLE HAVE **LIKES AND DISLIKES,** RIGHT?
YEAH, SO?
SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF
HEY, HIROSHI...
...WHAT'S WITH YOUR GRANDMA?
HOW CAN I EXPLAIN IT?

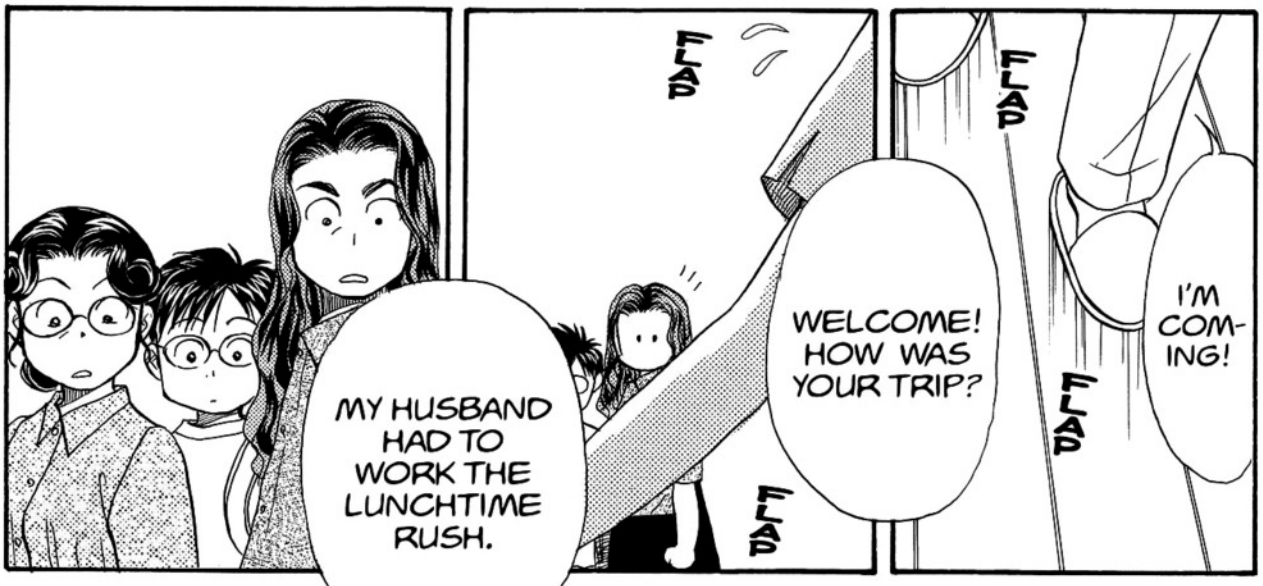

...AND SHE HATES WOMEN AND CHILDREN.
...SHE LOVES MEN...


I DON'T KNOW HOW SHE WAS WITH HER KIDS...
BUT WHAT ABOUT HER OWN KIDS? AND YOU?
I THINK IT'S MORE ABOUT BEHAVIOR THAN AGE.
...BUT SHE WASN'T VERY CUDDLY WITH ME.


BUT AREN'T WE CHILDREN?
THIS IS OUR STOP!
IS THERE AN AGE LIMIT?

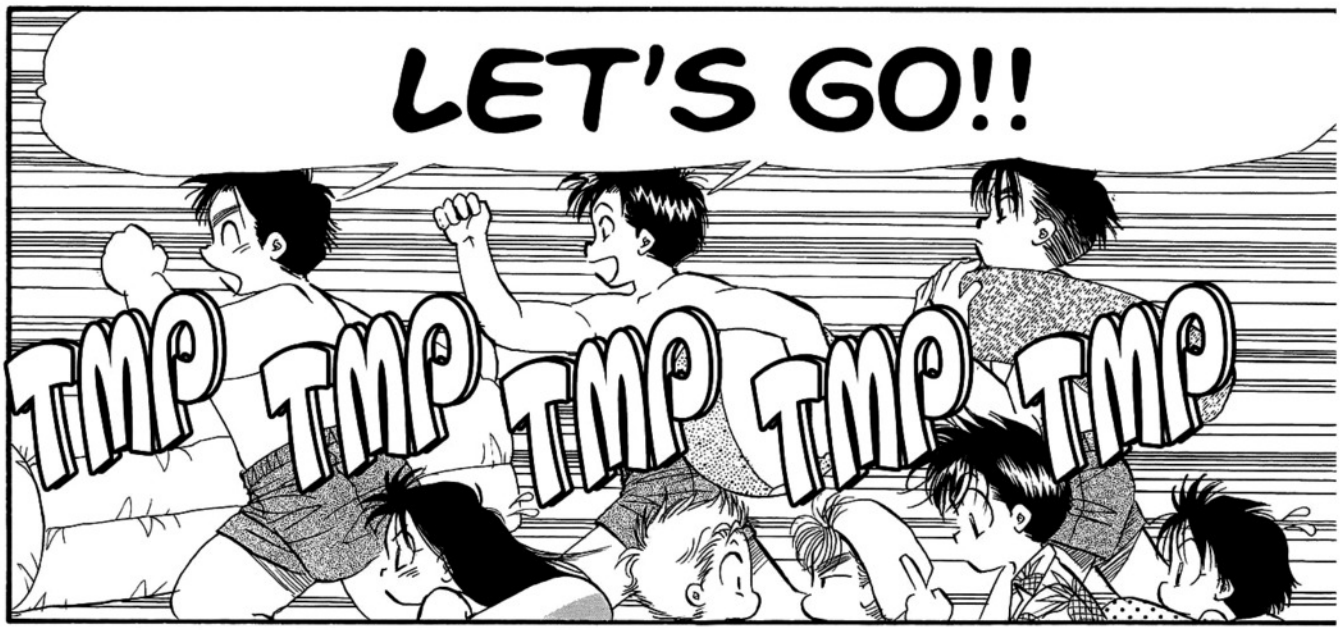

WHEW...
NOT REALLY. SHE ONLY GOES FOR GOOD-LOOKING GUYS.
SHE LOVES MEN, EH? COULD MEAN TROUBLE FOR ME.
VROOM

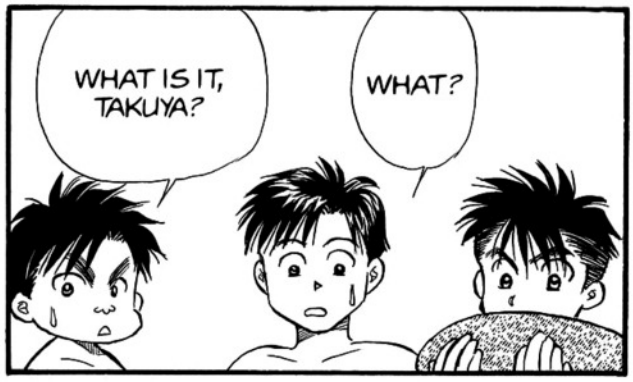

YACK
THE BEACH IS RIGHT OUT THERE.
I WANT TO GO SWIM-MING!
MIDORI! HIROSHI AND HIS PARTY ARE HERE!
YACK


MY HUSBAND HAD TO WORK THE LUNCHTIME RUSH.
FLAP
WELCOME! HOW WAS YOUR TRIP?
FLAP
FLAP
I'M COM-ING!
FLAP

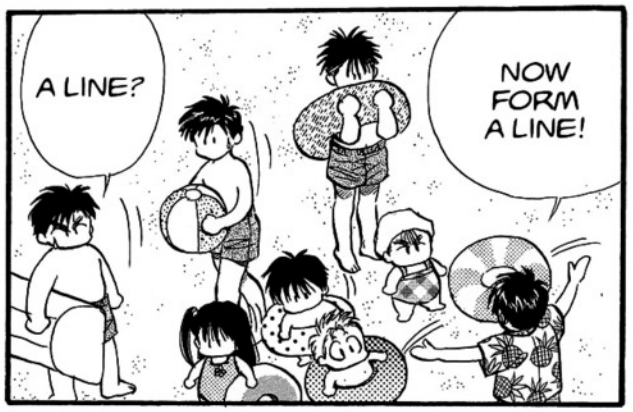
OH, THIS?
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU? YOU LOOK LIKE A MALE IMPERSONATOR FROM THE TAKARAZUKA REVUE*!
HOW MIDORI USED TO LOOK
HEE3
HEE3
*FAMOUS ALL-FEMALE THEATRICAL TROUPE.
I'LL SHOW YOU TO YOUR ROOMS.
PLEASE COME IN.
M-MIDORI?
SHEEZ
SHE EVEN LAUGHS LIKE A MAN.
IN AN ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE MOTHER'S HATRED OF WOMEN, I ADOPTED THE TAKARAZUKA LOOK.
AMA-ZING.
HO HO HO
What can I say?
YACK
MIDORI, WE'RE A LITTLE TIRED. WE'RE GOING TO TAKE A SHORT NAP.
YACK
YACK
WE RE-MOVED THE PARTITION BETWEEN TWO ROOMS TO MAKE ONE BIG ONE.
THE LITTLE ONES CAN ALL STAY IN THE SAME ROOM.
YAY!

SPLASH
SPLASH
LET'S GO TO THE BEACH!
OKAY.
BEACH! BEACH!
MINORU
AWE
AMAZING!
THE SEA AND THE SKY ARE SO BLUE!
AMAZING! I CAN'T BELIEVE WE'RE STILL IN JAPAN!
WIGHT!
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO WARM UP BEFORE YOU GO SWIMMING.
WHUP
We learned that in swim class, remember?
HUH?
WHAP
MINORU, WAIT!
WOW! ♡
HEY!
TUP TUP TUP


LET'S GO!!
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP


WHAT IS IT, TAKUYA?
WHAT?

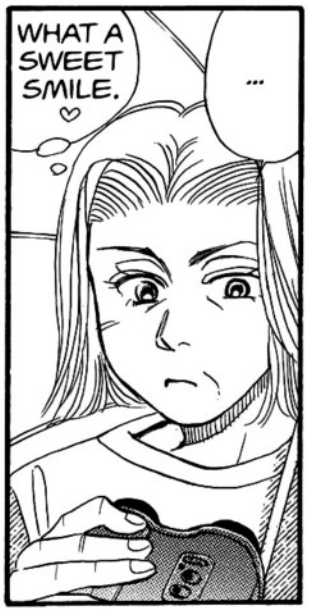
WE HAVE TO SET A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR THE KIDS.
DON'T YOU KNOW?


A LINE?
NOW FORM A LINE!

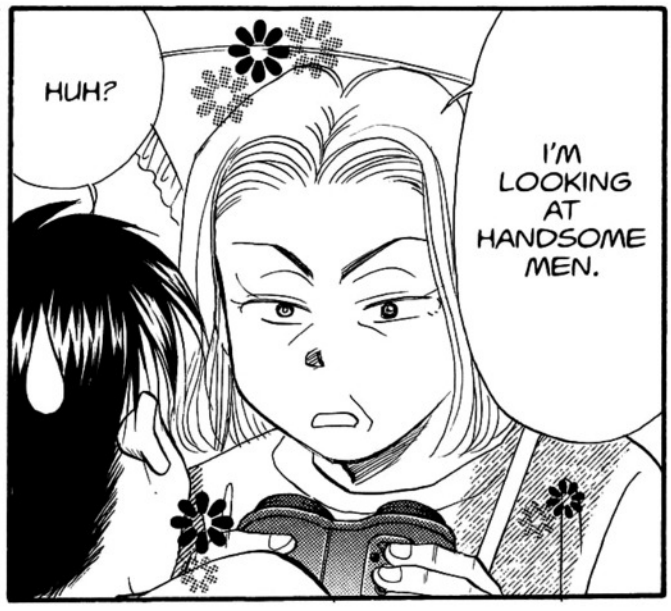
S...
STOP!!
DING

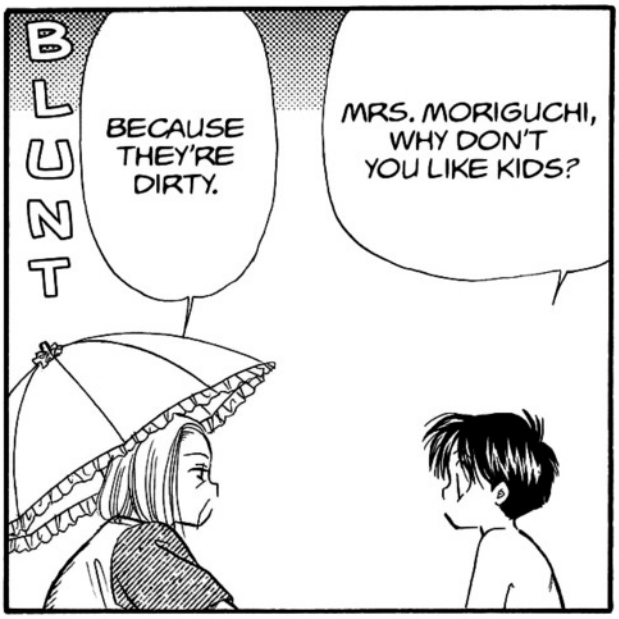
CHAN-CHARA-CHAA-RA-RA-RAA CHAN-CHARA-RAA...
HE'S EVEN DOING THE MUSIC.
TAKUYA ...
HUH?
PRE-SWIM EXERCISES! BEGIN!!
THEY DON'T MAKE MANY BOYS LIKE HIM ANYMORE.
HUH?
He's differ-ent.
HMM...
...
SPLASH
THREE, FOUR!
ONE, TWO,
SPLASH

WOW!
HUBBA!!
VEEN
HE'S GOR-GEOUS! ♡
AND WHAT A BODY! ♡
HUH?
ALL RIGHT! LET'S GO IN!
OH! ♡
THAT'S...
HERE
...MORIGUCHI'S GRANDMA.
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT, MA'AM?
A BIRD? THE OCEAN?

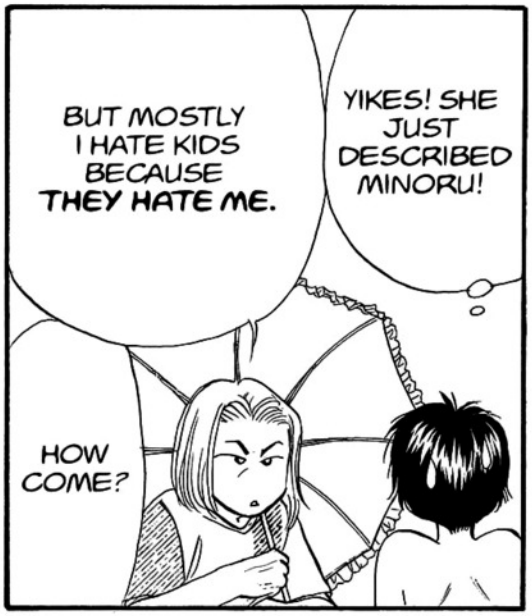

WHAT A SWEET SMILE.
...

IS IT FUN?
HEH


HUH?
I'M LOOKING AT HANDSOME MEN.

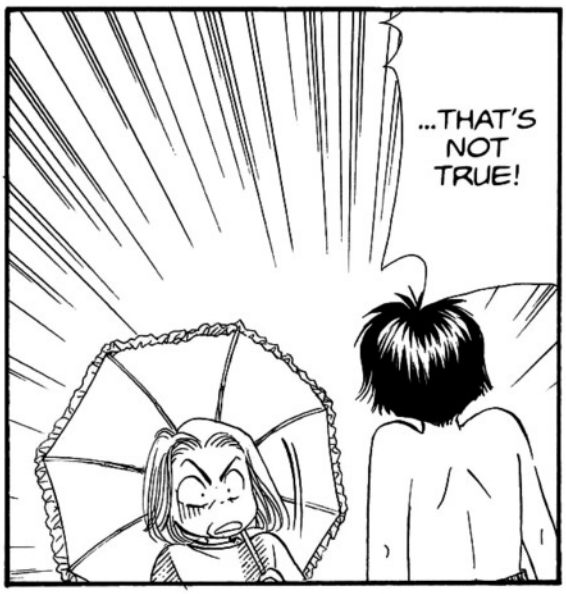

BLUNT
BECAUSE THEY'RE DIRTY.
MRS. MORIGUCHI, WHY DON'T YOU LIKE KIDS?

REVENGE?
...I MADE IT MY HOBBY.
I STARTED DOING IT FOR REVENGE, BUT IT WAS SO MUCH FUN...
REVENGE AGAINST WHO?

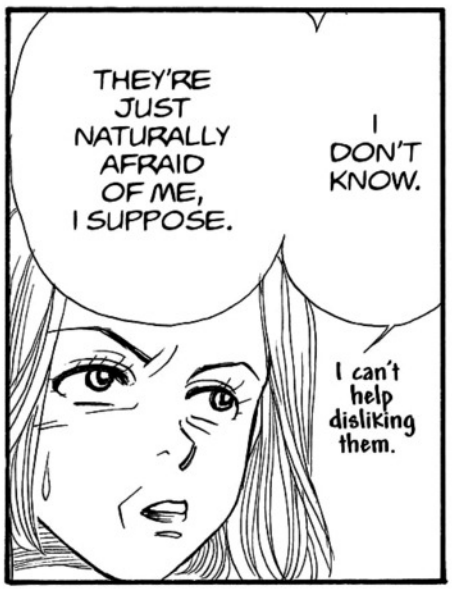

BUT MOSTLY I HATE KIDS BECAUSE THEY HATE ME.
YIKES! SHE JUST DESCRIBED MINORU!
HOW COME?

THE WAY THEY EAT AND PLAY IS DISGUSTING.
THAT'S RIGHT. RUNNY NOSES, PEE-PEE, DIRTY DIAPERS...

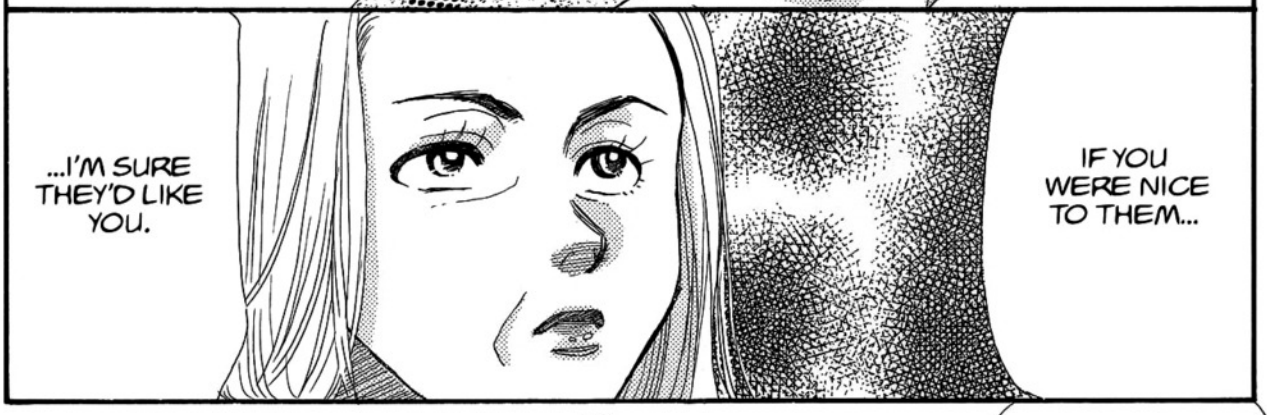
D-DIRTY?

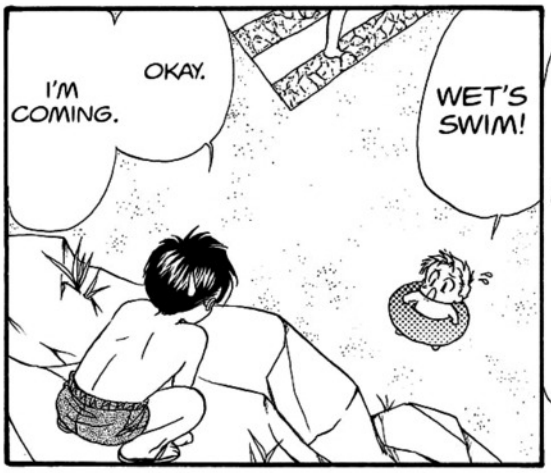

...THAT'S NOT TRUE!

BUT...

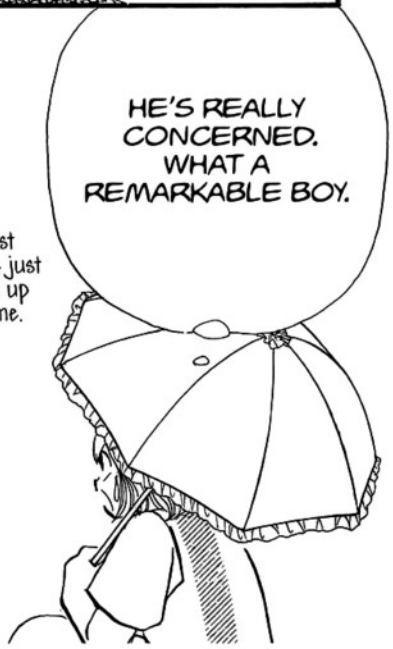

THEY'RE JUST NATURALLY AFRAID OF ME, I SUPPOSE.
I DON'T KNOW.
I can't help disliking them.

...MAYBE KIDS ARE MESSY, BUT I DON'T THINK THEY'RE NATURALLY AFRAID OF YOU.
I MEAN ...

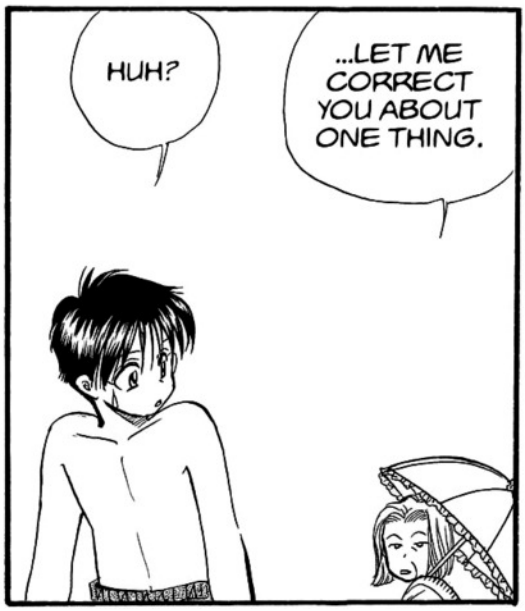

...I'M SURE THEY'D LIKE YOU.
IF YOU WERE NICE TO THEM...


I'M COMING.
OKAY.
WET'S SWIM!

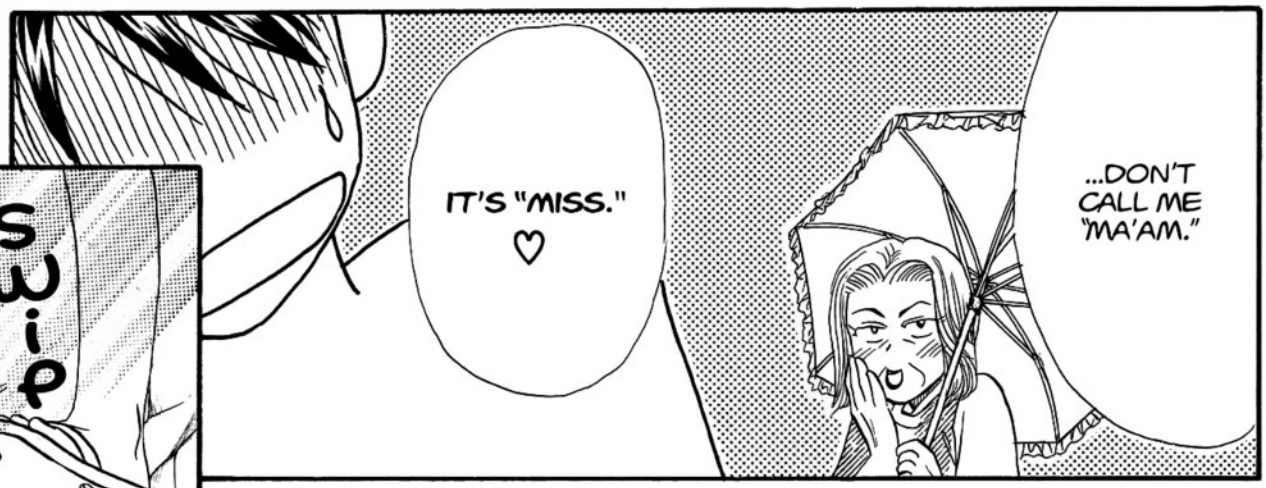
BWAZA!
Most people just give up on me.


HE'S REALLY CONCERNED. WHAT A REMARKABLE BOY.

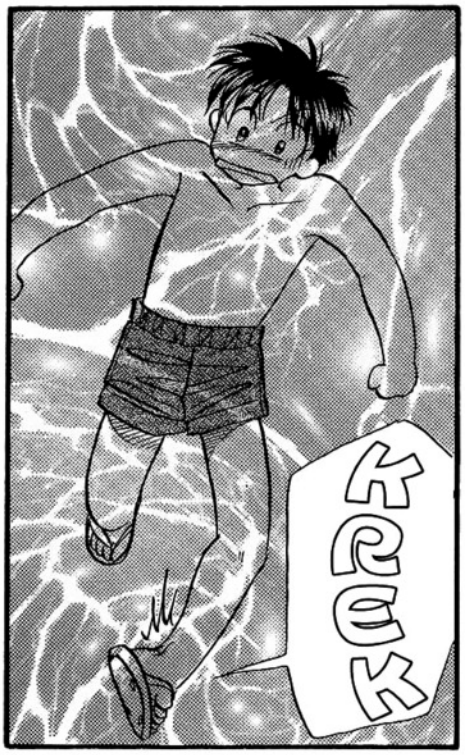
JUST...
WHAT'S THAT?
DID I SAY TOO MUCH?


HUH?
...LET ME CORRECT YOU ABOUT ONE THING.

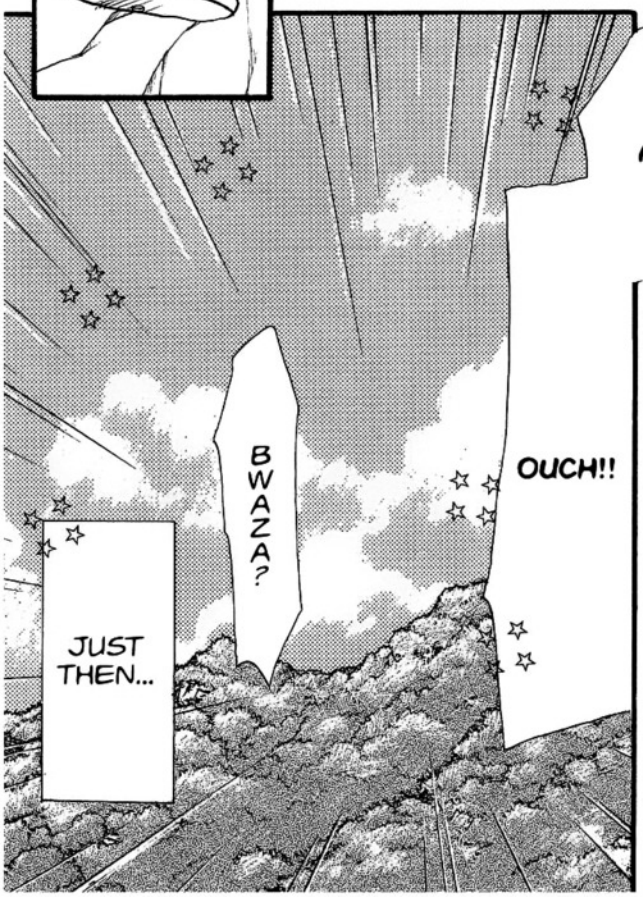
TAKUYA...


...DON'T CALL ME "MA'AM."
IT'S "MISS." ♡

SWIP


KREK

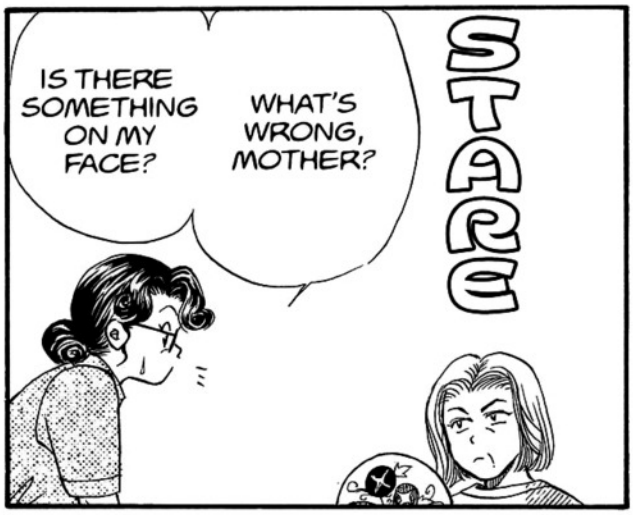
AH!!

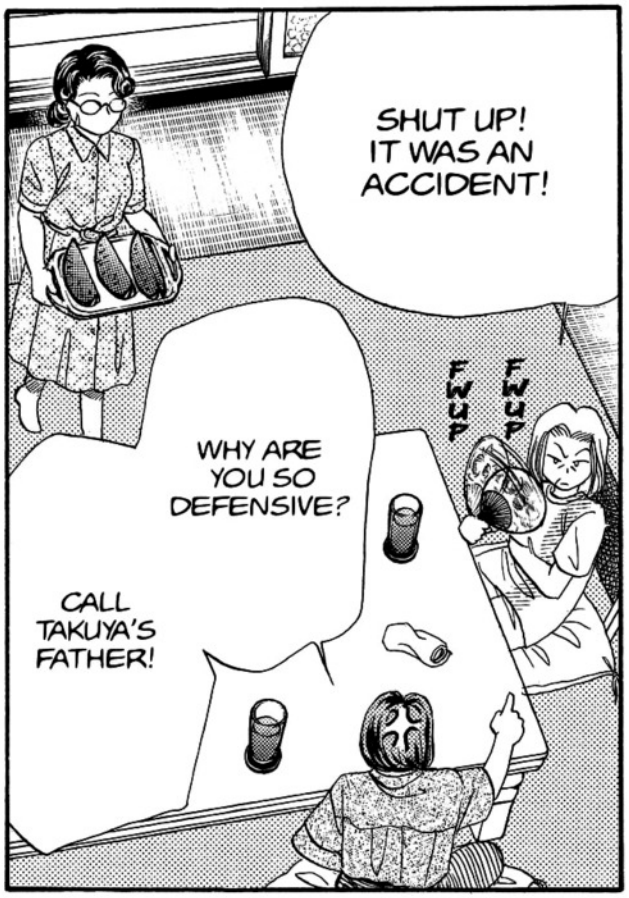

OUCH!!
BWAZA?
JUST THEN...

HOW DID HE GET INJURED WHEN MOM WAS RIGHT THERE?
THROB
THROB

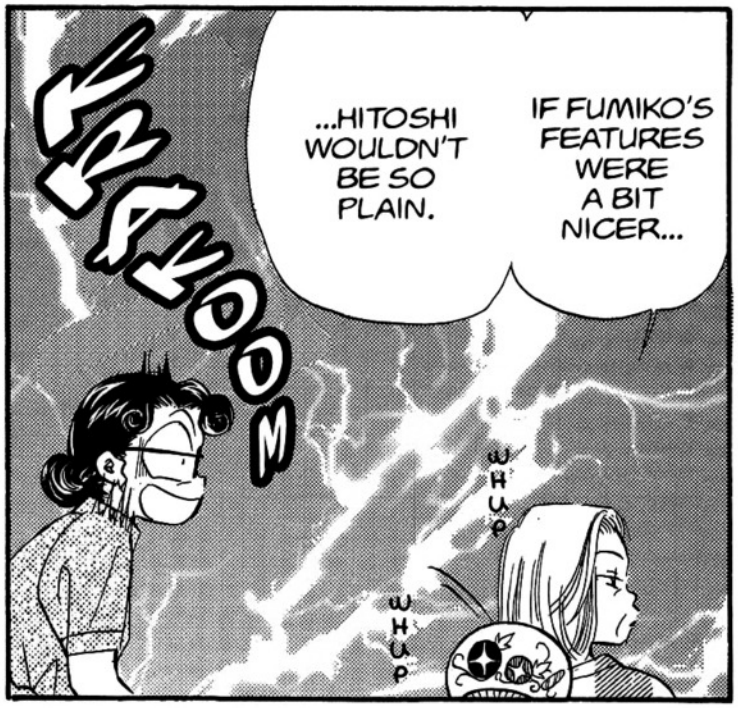
I DIDN'T EVEN GET MY FEET WET.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, TAKUYA?
IT HURTS, BWAZA?
WHAT BAD LUCK. INJURED ON THE FIRST DAY OF VACATION.
...I SPRAINED MY ANKLE.

LET'S ALL CALM DOWN. I'LL LET TAKUYA'S FATHER KNOW WHAT HAPPENED.


STARE
IS THERE SOMETHING ON MY FACE?
WHAT'S WRONG, MOTHER?


SHUT UP! IT WAS AN ACCIDENT!
FWUP
FWUP
WHY ARE YOU SO DEFENSIVE?
CALL TAKUYA'S FATHER!

...
OH, HELLO, HIROYUKI.

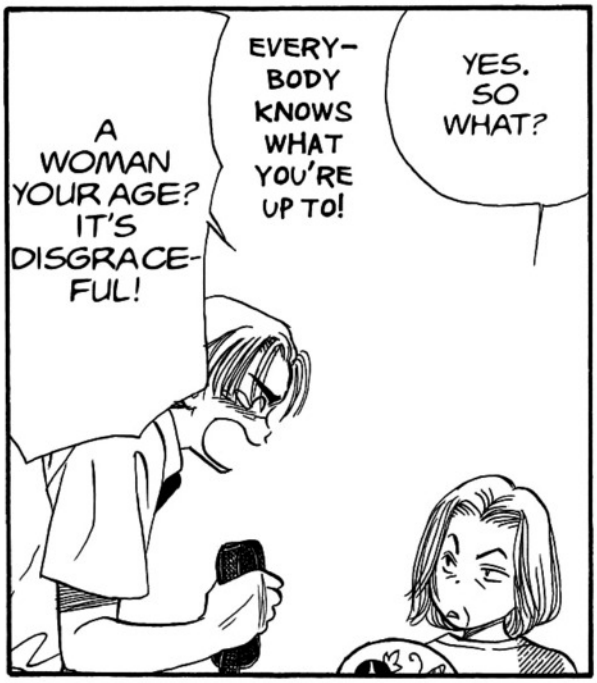

KRAKOOM
...HITOSHI WOULDN'T BE SO PLAIN.
IF FUMIKO'S FEATURES WERE A BIT NICER...
WHUP
WHUP

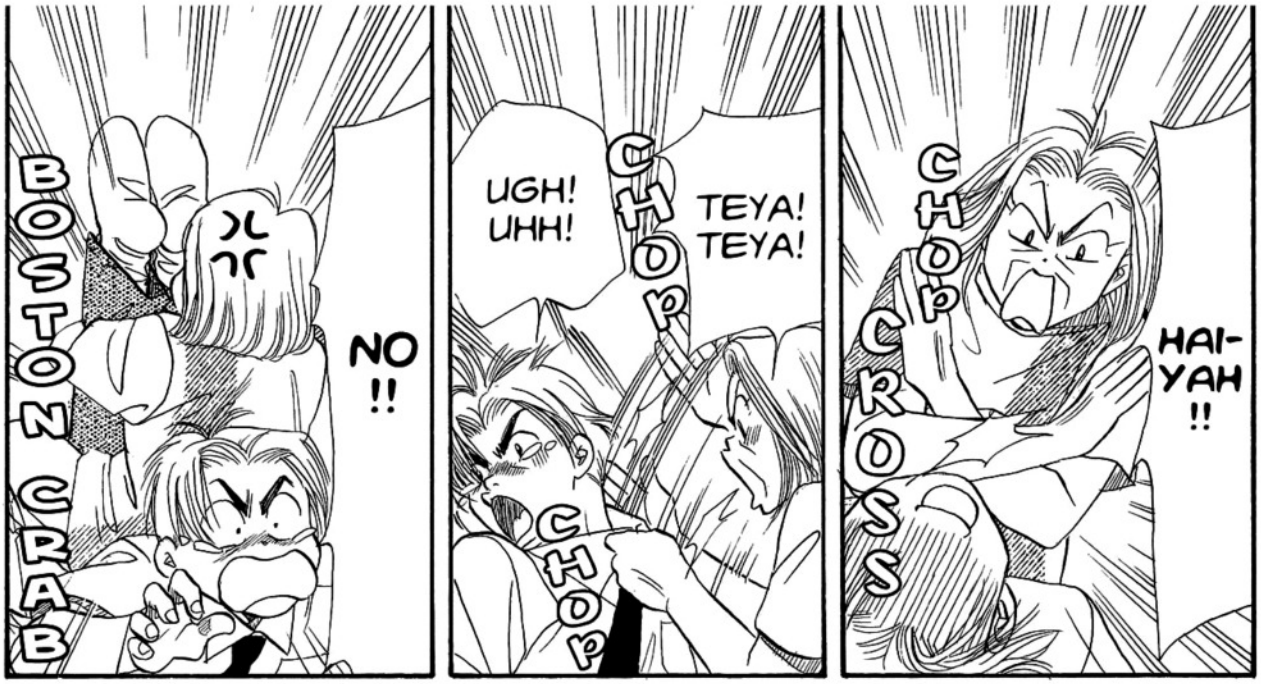
HAVE YOU BEEN USING MY BINO-CULARS...
...TO CHECK OUT GUYS AGAIN, MOM?
They were in the entryway.

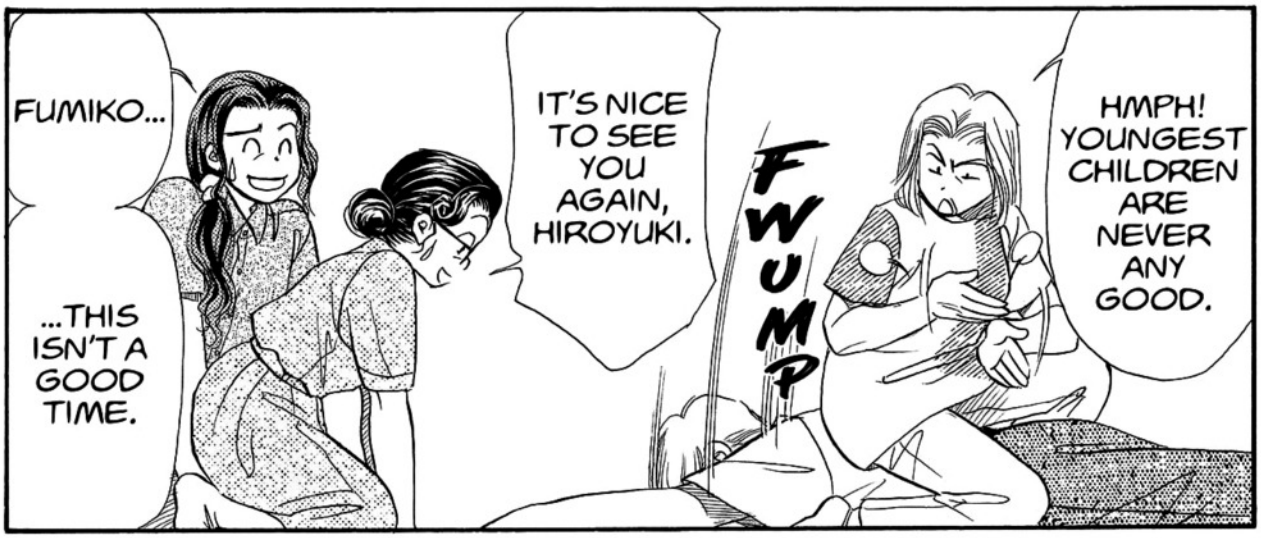
YOU'VE ENDURED SO MUCH, FUMIKO.
I'm sorry.
I CAN'T BREATHE!
WHUP
WEEZ
WEEZ

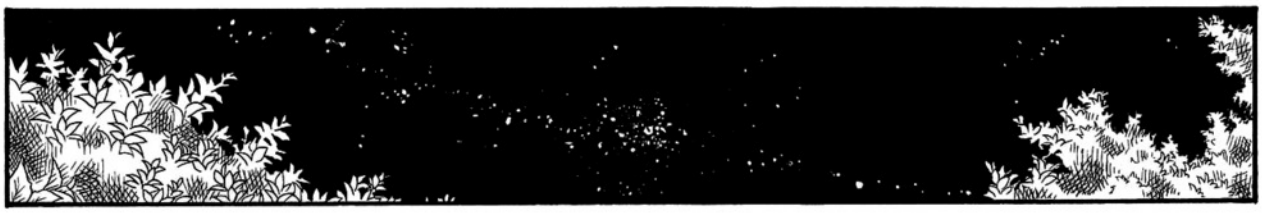
HOW DARE YOU?
YOU'RE A SEX FIEND.

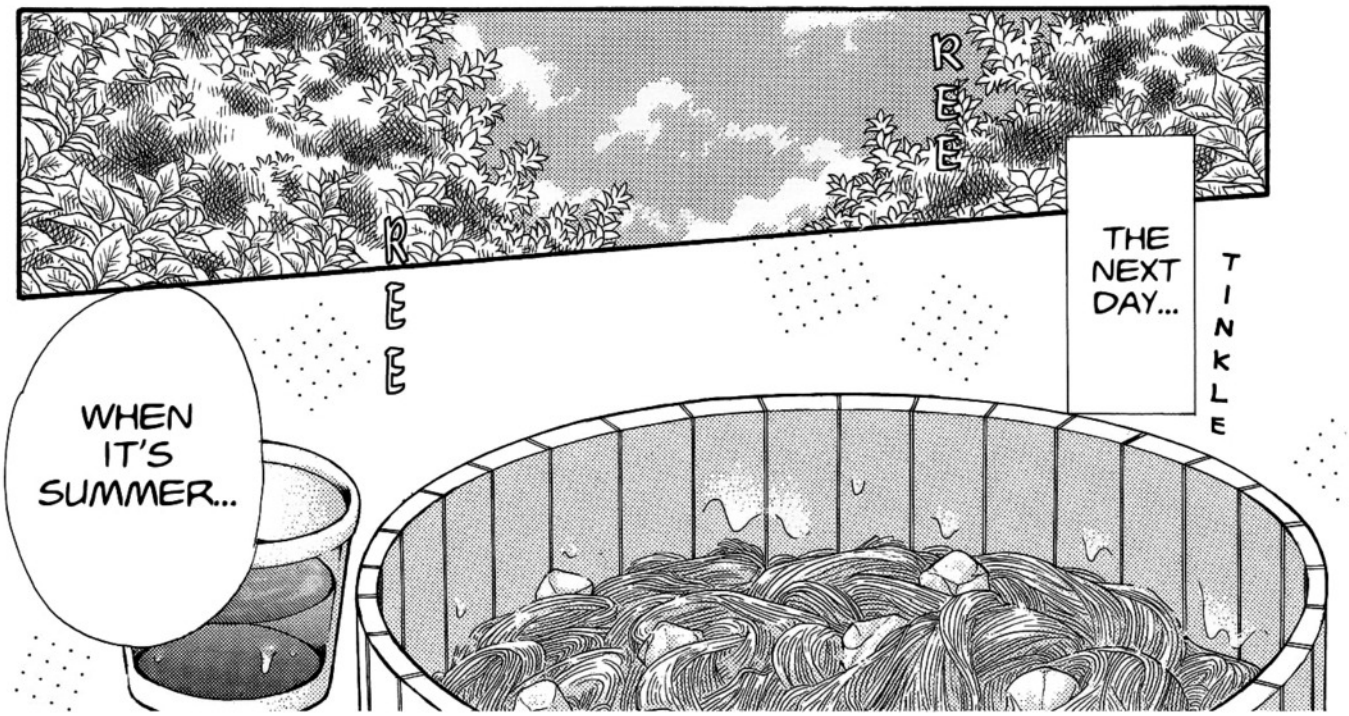
NONE.
HAVE YOU NO PITY ON OUR LATE FATHER?
HMPH


A WOMAN YOUR AGE? IT'S DISGRACE-FUL!
EVERY-BODY KNOWS WHAT YOU'RE UP TO!
YES. SO WHAT?


HAI-YAH !!
CHOP CROSS
TEYA! TEYA!
UGH! UHH!
CHOP
CHOP
NO !!
BOSTON CRAB

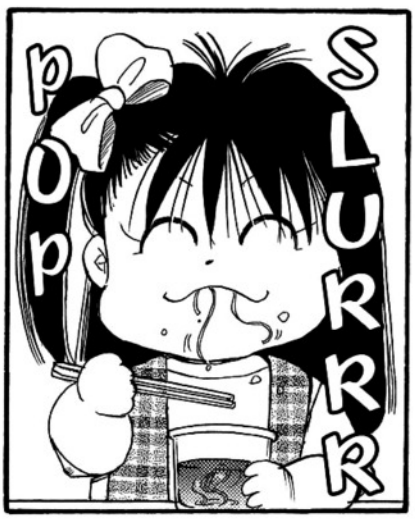

HMPH! YOUNGEST CHILDREN ARE NEVER ANY GOOD.
FWUMP
IT'S NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN, HIROYUKI.
FUMIKO...
...THIS ISN'T A GOOD TIME.



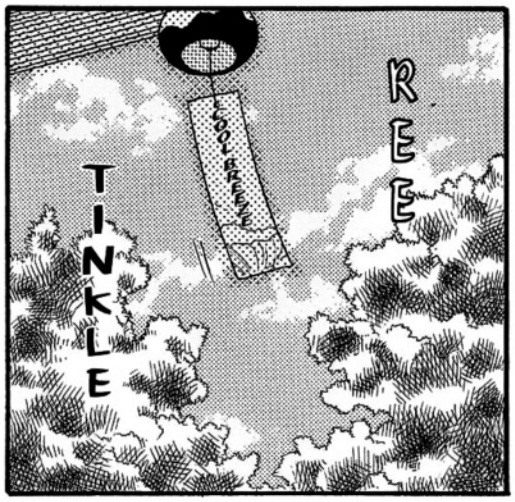

THE NEXT DAY...
TINKLE
REE
REE
WHEN IT'S SUMMER...

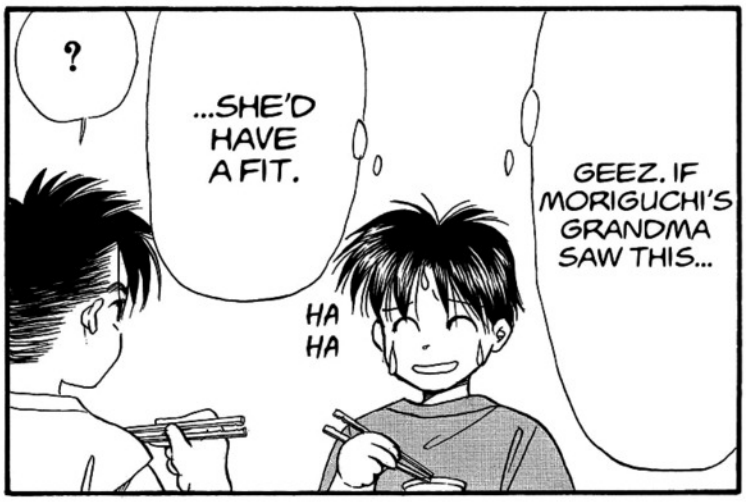
TINKLE
SLURP
SLURP
AUNT MIDORI SAYS THERE ARE PLENTY MORE.
...YOU GOTTA HAVE NOODLES!
TINKLE
TINKLE
M-MINORU ...
SLURP
SLURP
LUNCHTIME

MWAAAAAH

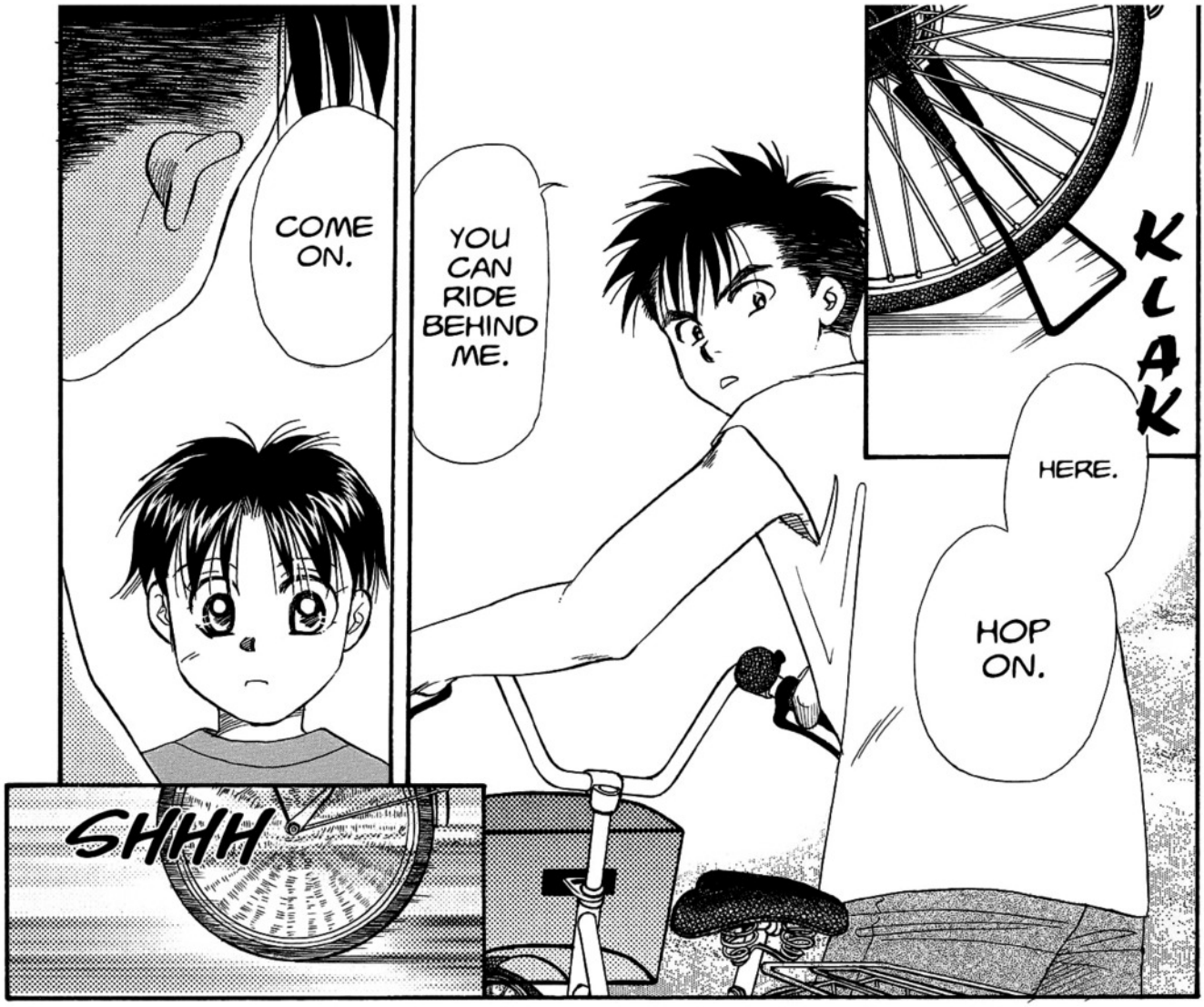

POP
SLURRR

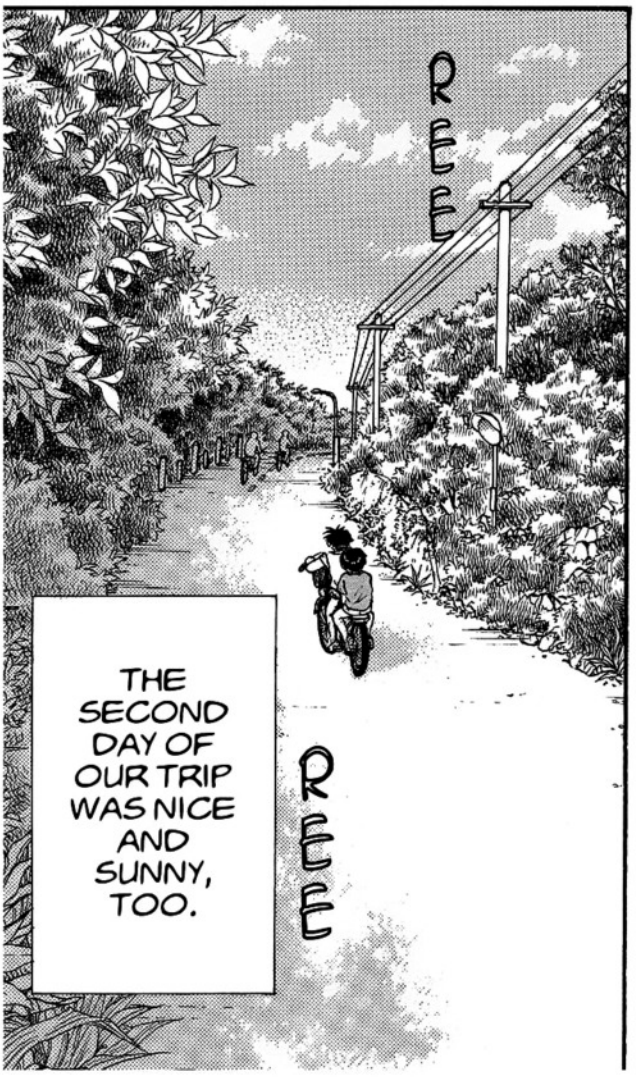
SLURP
SLURP

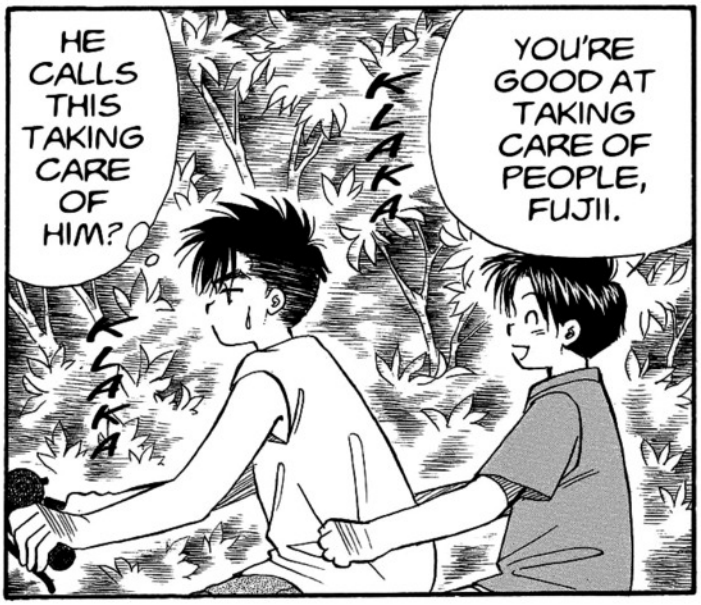

TINKLE
REE

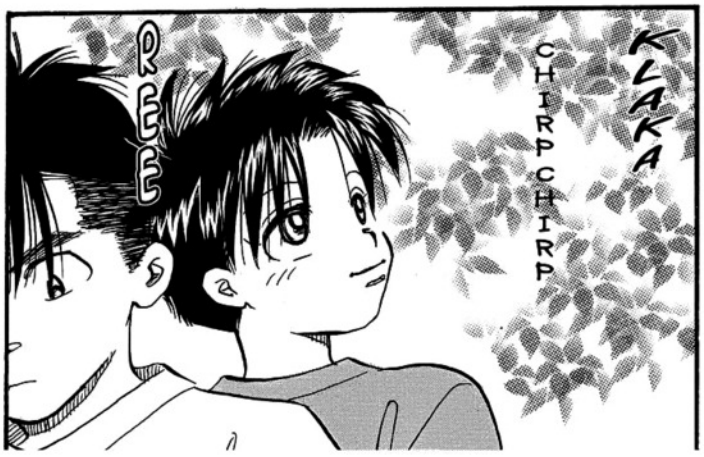

?
...SHE'D HAVE A FIT.
GEEZ. IF MORIGUCHI'S GRANDMA SAW THIS...
HA HA

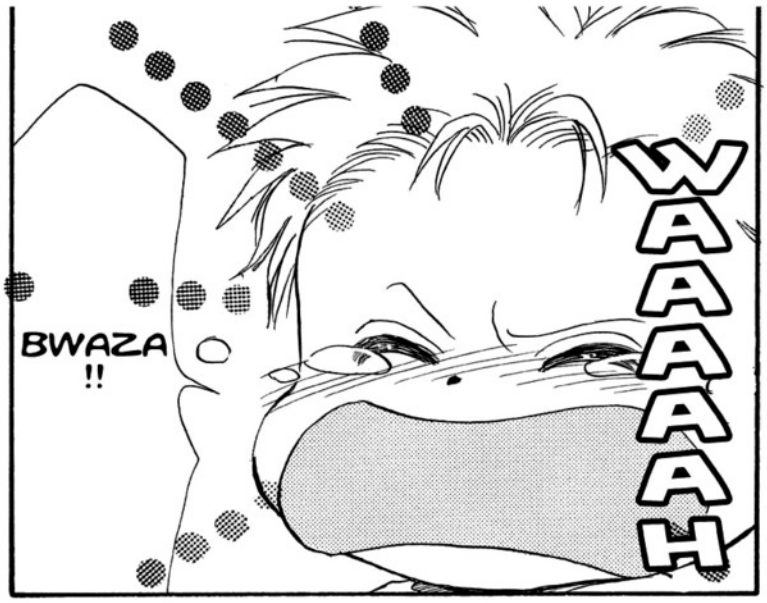
ZZZ
ZZZ
TINKLE
TINKLE
CREEK
ALL RIGHT...
YEAH, THERE'S NO WAY I CAN PEDAL.
YOU SURE YOU CAN'T MAKE IT, TAKUYA?
...WHILE THE LITTLE ONES ARE NAPPING.
NOW'S OUR CHANCE TO GO FOR A BIKE RIDE...
CREEK
CREEK
MY ANKLE'S TOO SORE.
YOU'RE NOT COMING, TAKUYA?
BUT IT WON'T BE ANY FUN WITHOUT YOU.
JUMP


COME ON.
YOU CAN RIDE BEHIND ME.
KLAK
HERE.
HOP ON.
SHHH

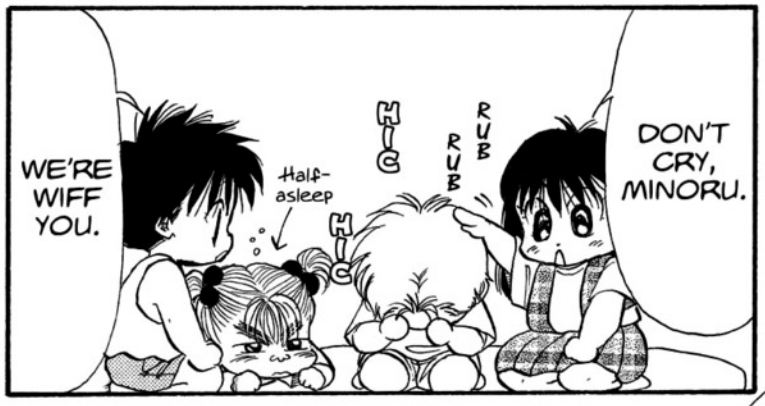

REEE
THE SECOND DAY OF OUR TRIP WAS NICE AND SUNNY, TOO.
REEE


HE CALLS THIS TAKING CARE OF HIM?
KLAKA
KLAKA
YOU'RE GOOD AT TAKING CARE OF PEOPLE, FUJII.

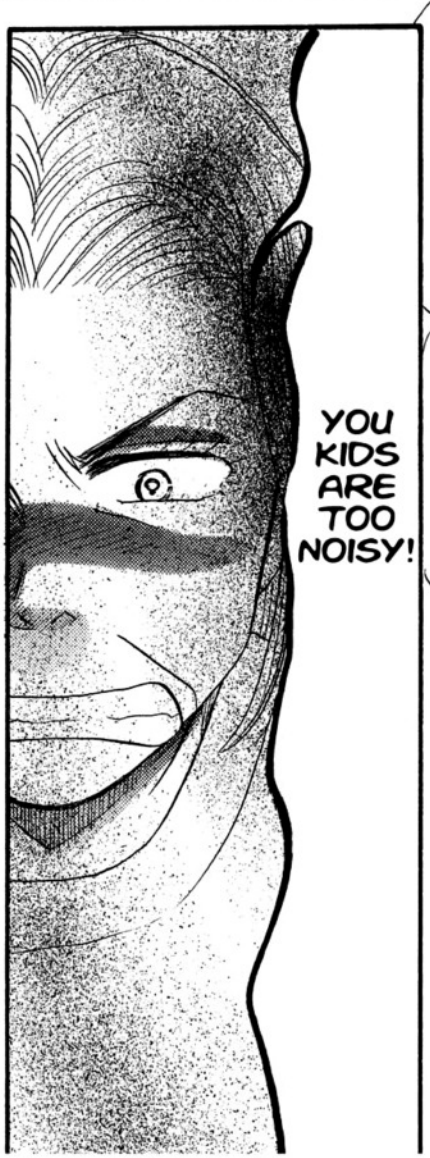

REEE
CHIRP CHIRP
KLAKA


WAAAAAH
BWAZA !!

FOR A WHILE ...
WAAH
WAAH
...I FORGOT ALL ABOUT MINORU AND THE LITTLE KIDS.

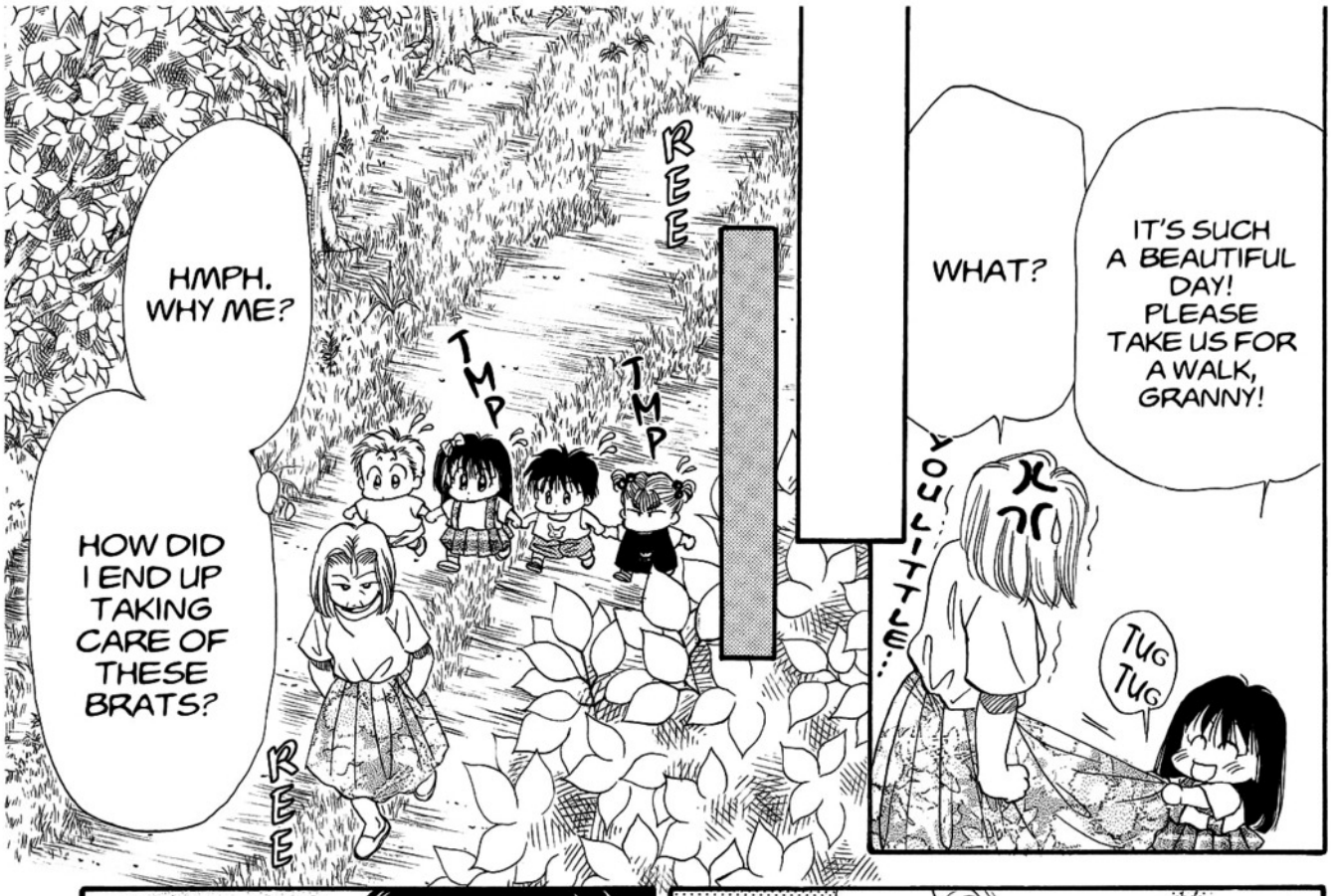

DON'T CRY, MINORU.
RUB
RUB
HIC
HIC
Half-asleep
WE'RE WIFF YOU.

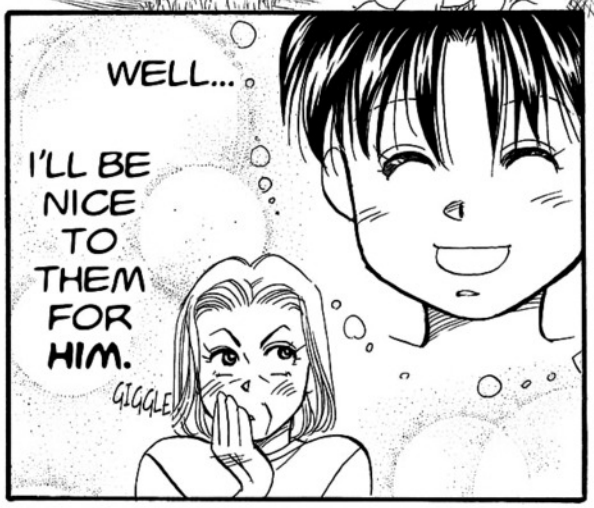
GEEZ! I CAN'T STAND KIDS! THEY'RE ALWAYS CRYING!
GRAAH!!
HUH?

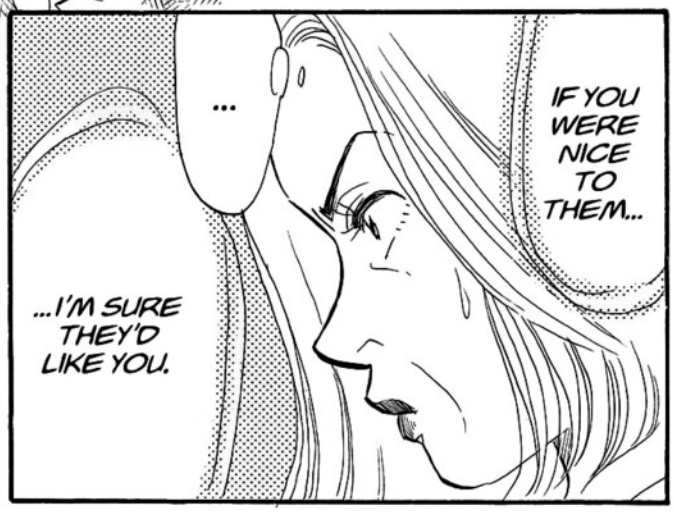

YOU KIDS ARE TOO NOISY!

HMM...
NOW I CAN'T SLEEP.
WHAT SHOULD I DO?

ICHIKA, I WANNA GO TO THE BEACH!
WE CAN'T, SILLY! WE'LL GET IN TROUBLE IF WE GO WITHOUT OUR BIG BROTHERS.


HMPH. WHY ME?
HOW DID I END UP TAKING CARE OF THESE BRATS?
REE
TMP
TMP
REE
WHAT?
IT'S SUCH A BEAUTIFUL DAY! PLEASE TAKE US FOR A WALK, GRANNY!
YOU LITTLE...
TUG TUG

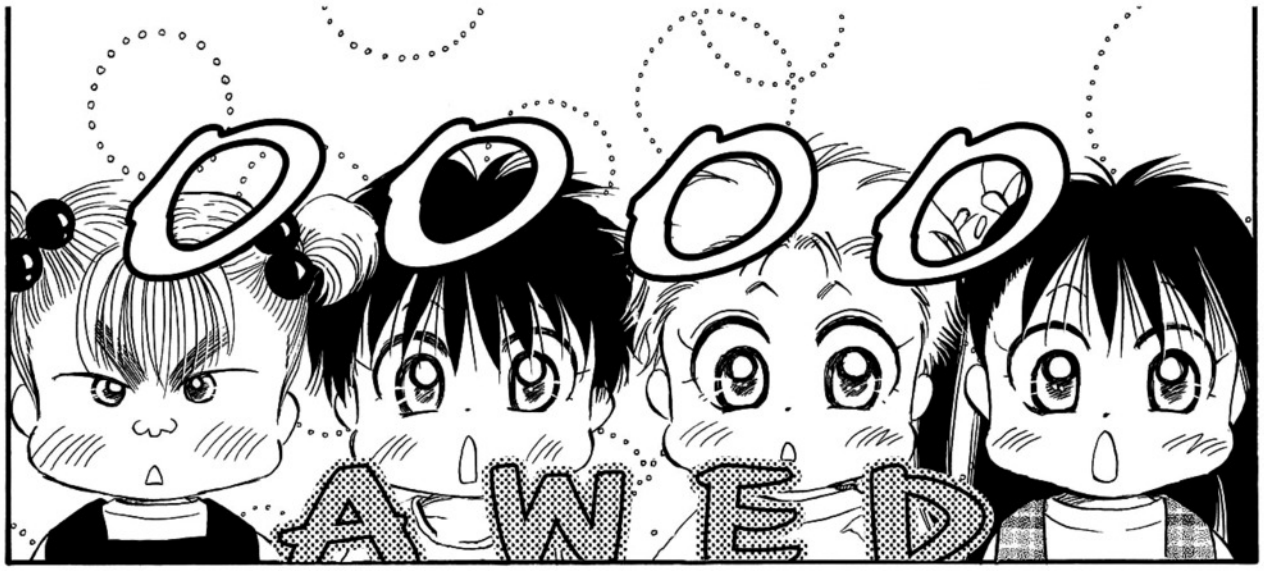

WELL...
I'LL BE NICE TO THEM FOR HIM.
GIGGLE

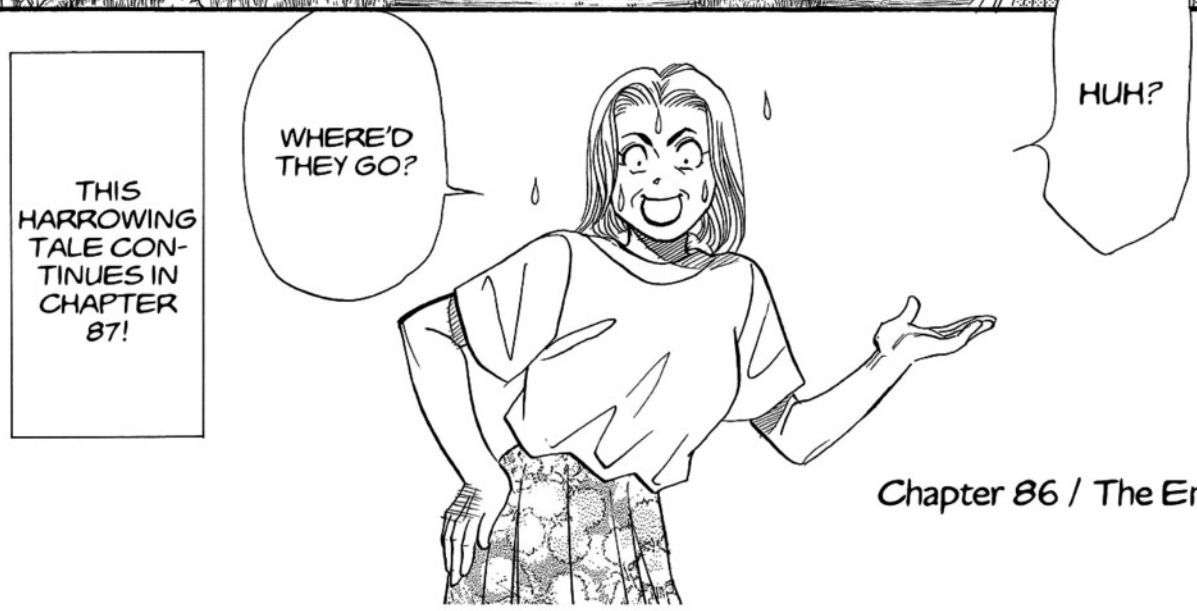

...
IF YOU WERE NICE TO THEM...
...I'M SURE THEY'D LIKE YOU.

TUP TUP TUP
MINORU?

SKRK
SKRK

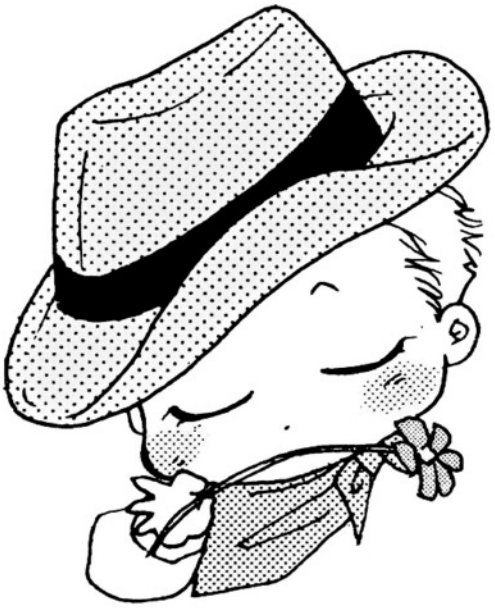
HUH?

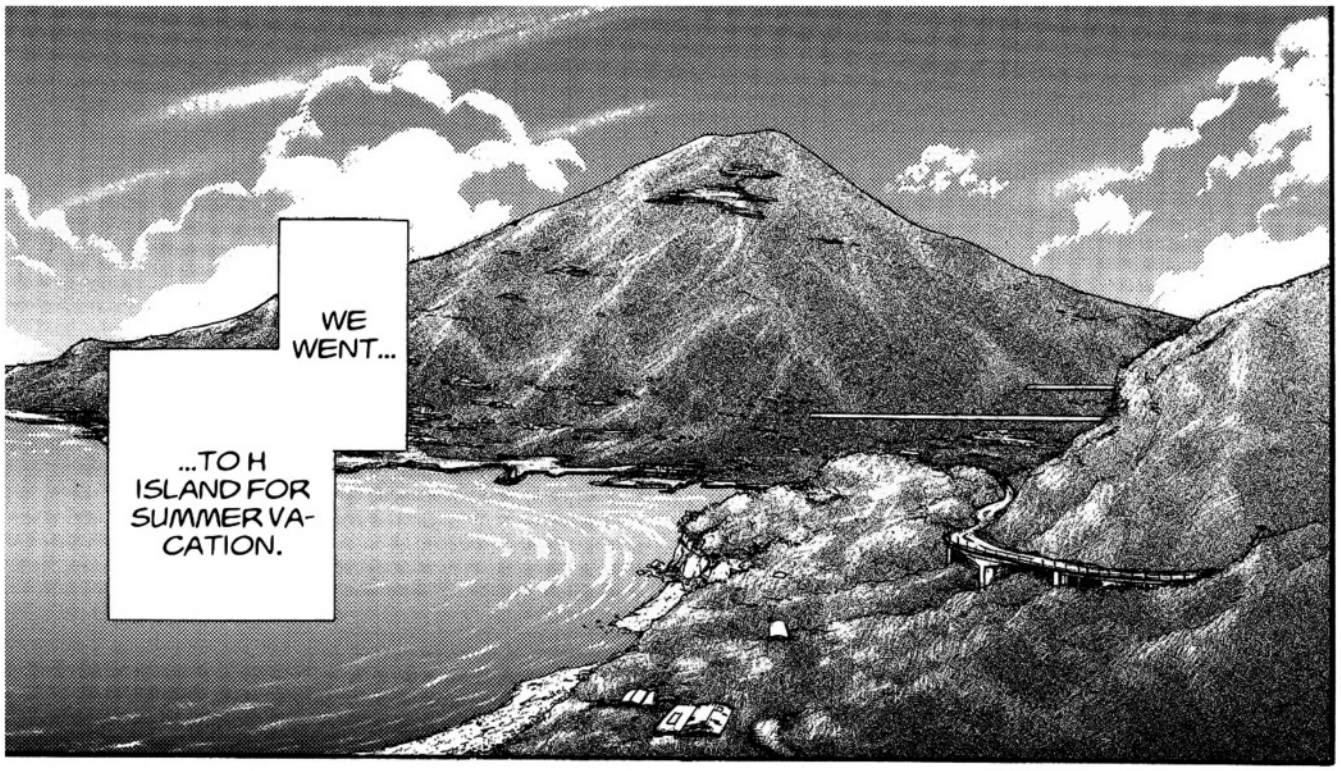


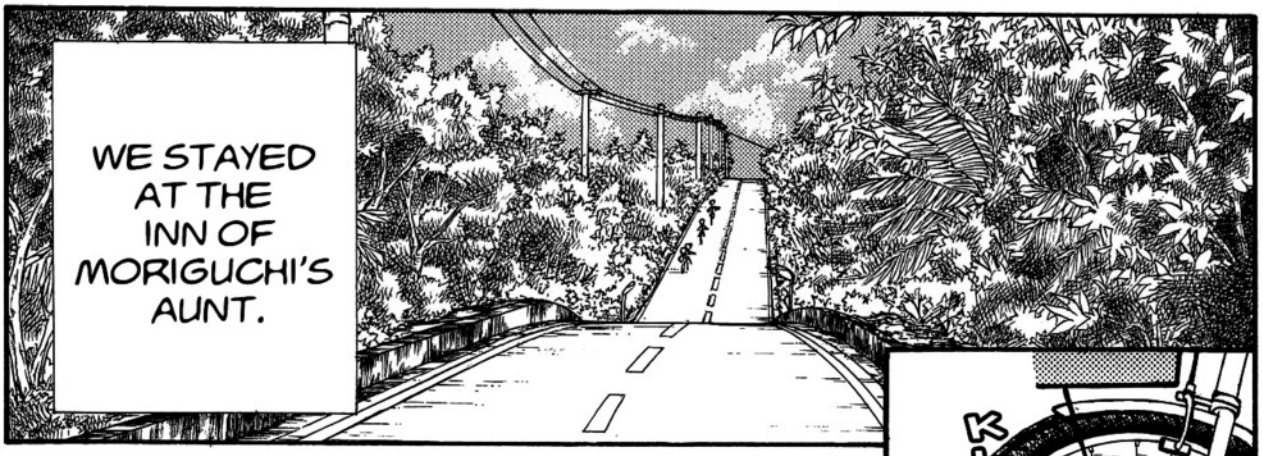


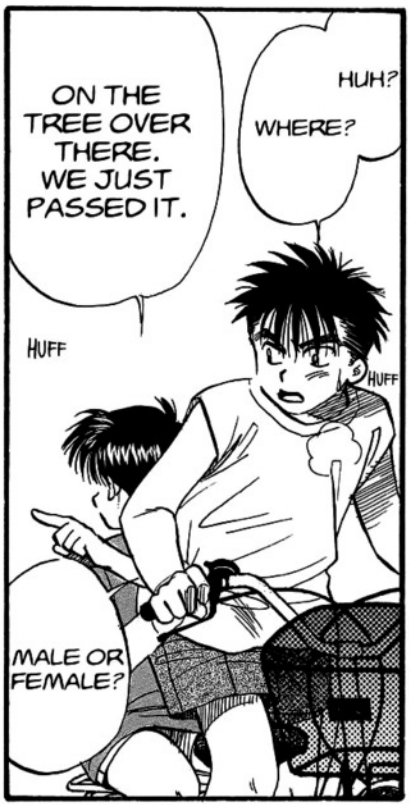
Chapter 86 / The End

BABY & Me
Chapter 87



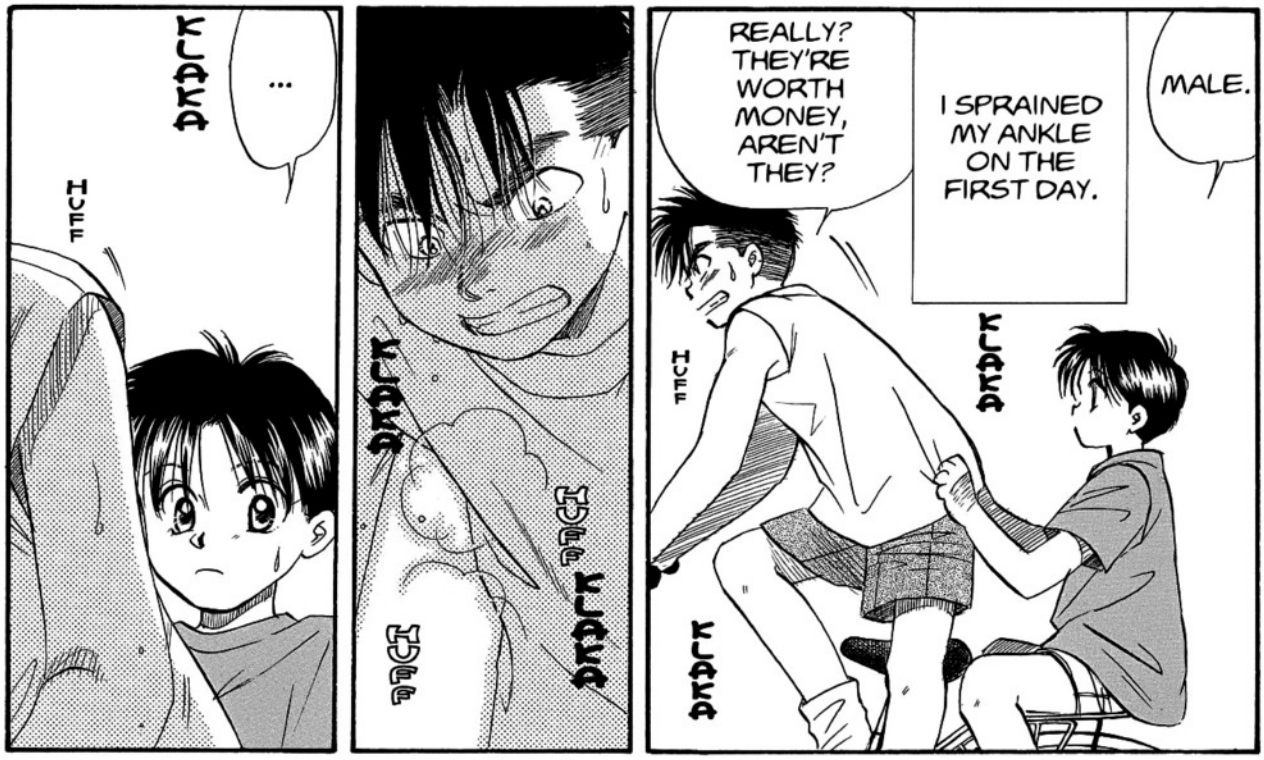

WE WENT...
...TO H ISLAND FOR SUMMER VA-CATION.

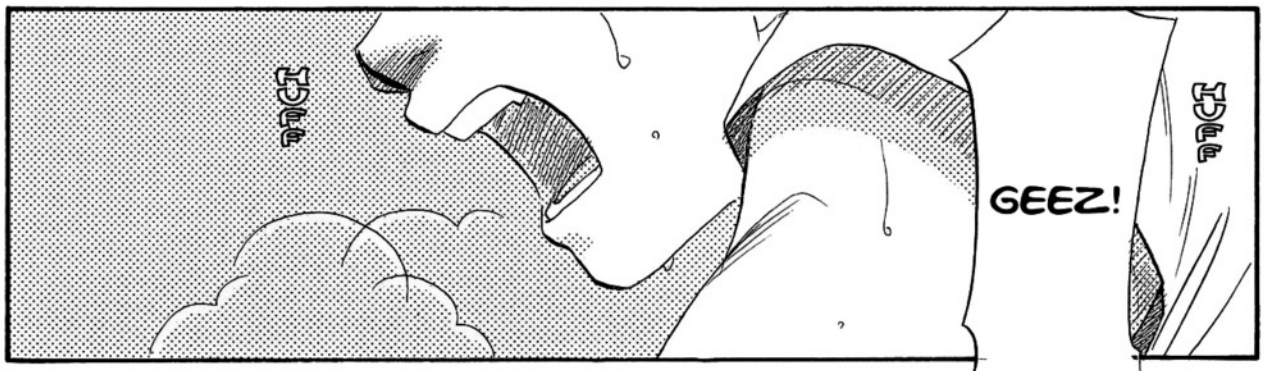

WE STAYED AT THE INN OF MORIGUCHI'S AUNT.


ON THE TREE OVER THERE. WE JUST PASSED IT.
HUH?
WHERE?
HUFF
HUFF
MALE OR FEMALE?

HEY, FUJII, LOOK!
A STAG BEETLE!

KLAKA
KLAKA


MALE.
I SPRAINED MY ANKLE ON THE FIRST DAY.
REALLY? THEY'RE WORTH MONEY, AREN'T THEY?
KLAKA
HUFF
KLAKA
KLAKA
HUFF
KLAKA
HUFF
KLAKA
...
HUFF


HUFF
GEEZ!
HUFF

I CAN WALK UNTIL IT GOES DOWNHILL AGAIN.
WE COULD GET OFF AND PUSH OUR BIKES FOR A WHILE.
HUFF
HUFF

IS THIS ROUTE ALL UPHILL?
NUTS!!

HOW LONG DOES THIS TRIP TAKE?
ABOUT TWO AND A HALF HOURS.
I'M THIRSTY. AREN'T THERE ANY DRINK MACHINES AROUND HERE?
KLIK
KLIK
KLIK
LIMP
LIMP
HOW LONG AGO DID WE LEAVE THE INN?
ABOUT 30 MINUTES, MAYBE.
KLIK
KLIK
KLIK
KLIK
I'M TOO SERIOUS?
I HATE TO SAY IT, BUT SOME-TIMES YOU'RE TOO SERIOUS, TAKUYA.
HUH?
ARE YOU WORRYING ABOUT THE KIDS?
YEAH?
THE KIDS'LL WAKE UP BEFORE WE GET BACK.
TWO AND A HALF HOURS, HUH?
ENOKI...
WHILE WE...
...MORIGUCHI'S GRANDMA WAS HAVING A TERRIBLE TIME...
...WERE OFF ON OUR BIKE RIDE...

HOW?
HOW COULD THEY DISAPPEAR SO FAST?
WHAT'LL I DO? I'VE LOST THE CHILDREN!!
REE
REE
OH NO!
THIS IS WHY I HATE KIDS!!
DARN IT!!
KRAK

WHAT'S WRONG, MINORU?
I HEAW SOMEBODY!
WE DON'T KNOW WHICH WAY WE CAME FROM?
NOPE.
HUH?
DON'T WORRY!
IF WE JUST GO BACK TO THE PATH...
...I'M SURE WE'LL FIND GRANNY.
RIGHT, MINORU?
YEAH.
WE'RE WOST!
NOD
EEEK! DON'T SAY THAT!
WHAM
WHAM
OW! OW!
IT'S...
DAT WAY.
SIGH
OH...
REALLY? OF COURSE!
SHE HAS INSTINCTS, LIKE ALL WILD ANIMALS!
SHOULD WE TWUST HER?

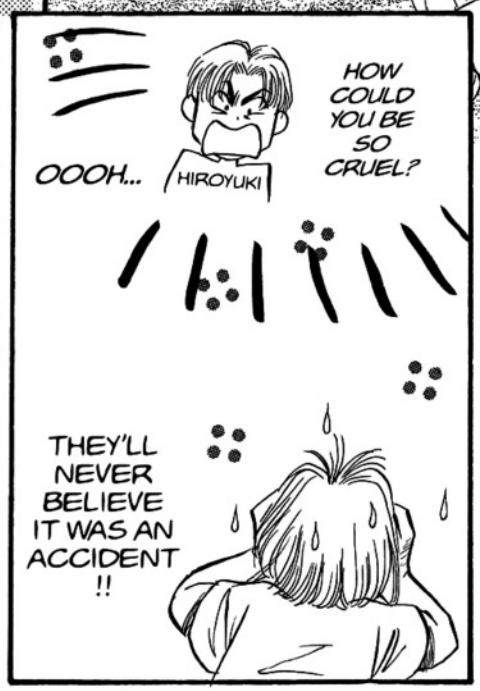
I'LL JUST KEEP LOOKING FOR THEM...
ARE YOU SURE IT'S THIS WAY?
YEAH.
RUSTLE
RUSTLE

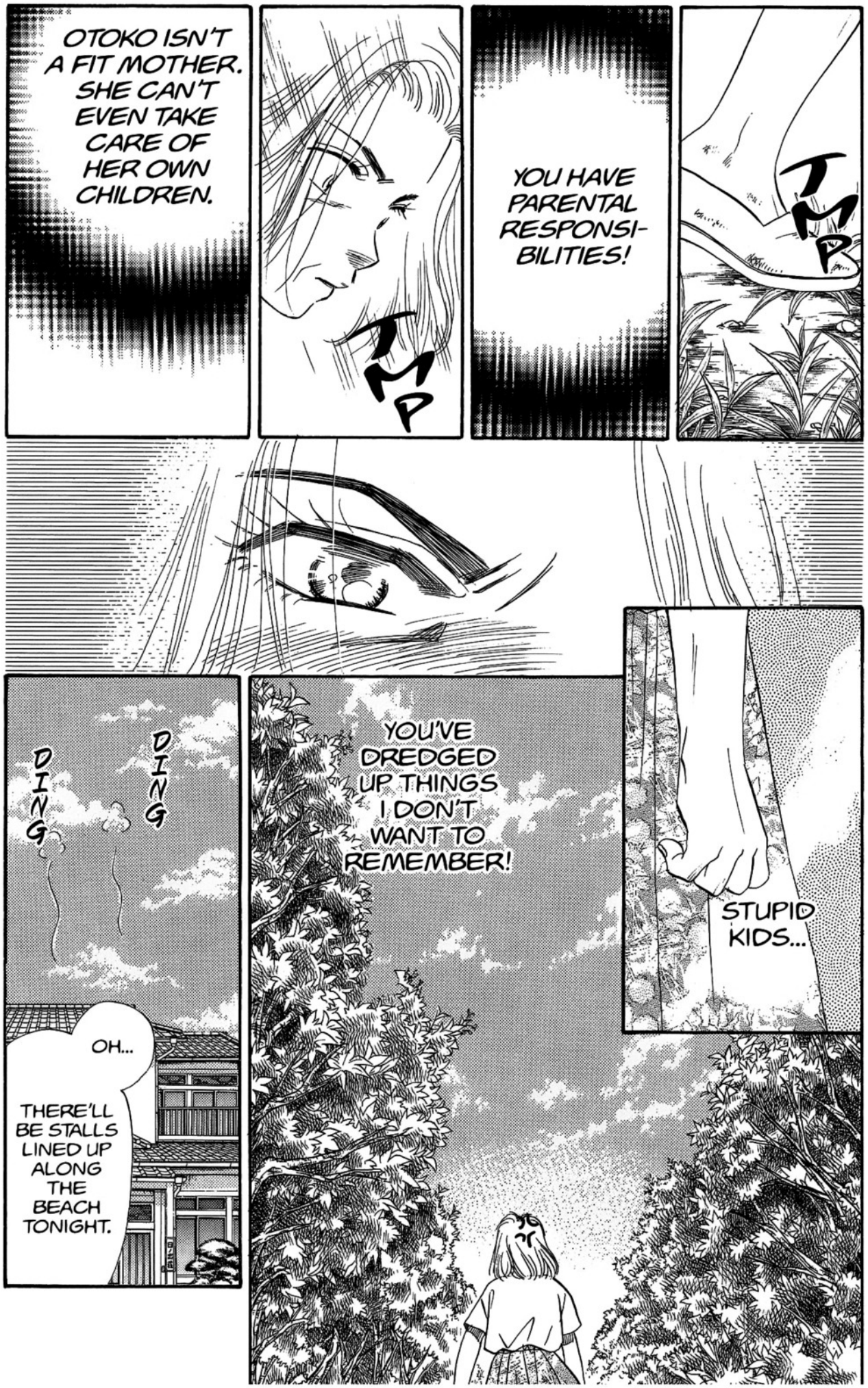
YOU DID THIS ON PURPOSE BECAUSE YOU HATE CHILDREN, DIDN'T YOU?
HIROSHI
...AND IF I CAN'T FIND THEM, I'LL GO GET HELP.

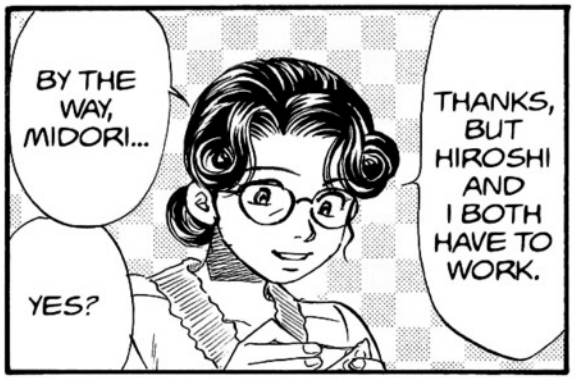
OKAY, I NEED TO CALM DOWN.
CHILDREN! ANSWER ME!!
HELLO!
REE
CHEEP CHEEP
REE
THEY ONLY DISAPPEARED A FEW MINUTES AGO. THEY CAN'T HAVE GONE FAR.

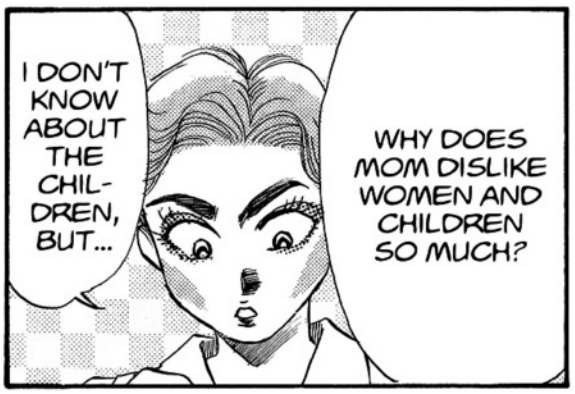
GOOD GRIEF!
SIGH...
TMP
TMP

I'LL HAVE TO FIND THEM MYSELF!
HSCH

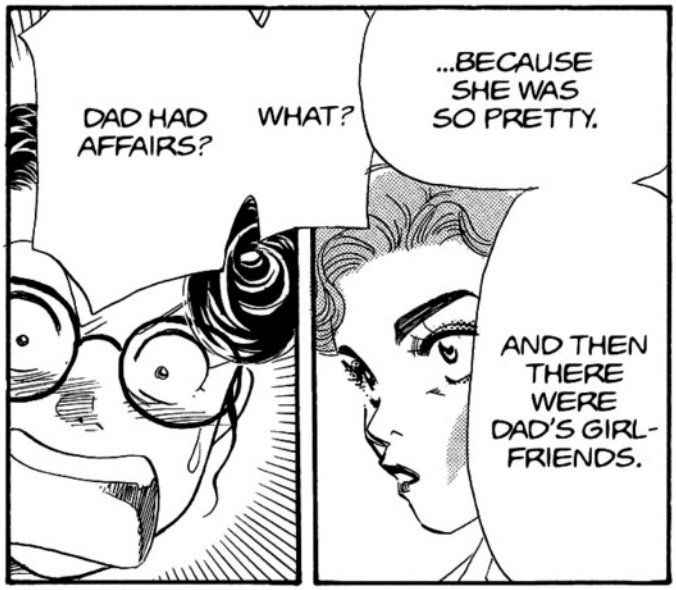

OOOH...
HIROYUKI
HOW COULD YOU BE SO CRUEL?
THEY'LL NEVER BELIEVE IT WAS AN ACCIDENT !!

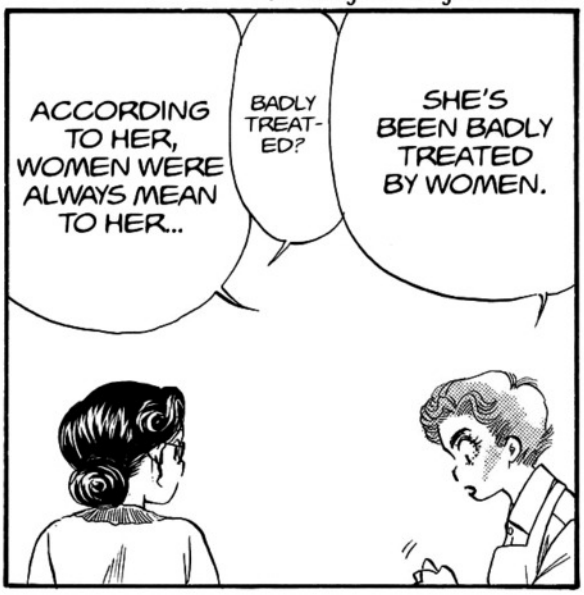

OTOKO ISN'T A FIT MOTHER. SHE CAN'T EVEN TAKE CARE OF HER OWN CHILDREN.
TMP
YOU HAVE PARENTAL RESPONSI-BILITIES!
TMP
STUPID KIDS...
YOU'VE DREDGED UP THINGS I DON'T WANT TO REMEMBER!
DING
DING
OH...
THERE'LL BE STALLS LINED UP ALONG THE BEACH TONIGHT.

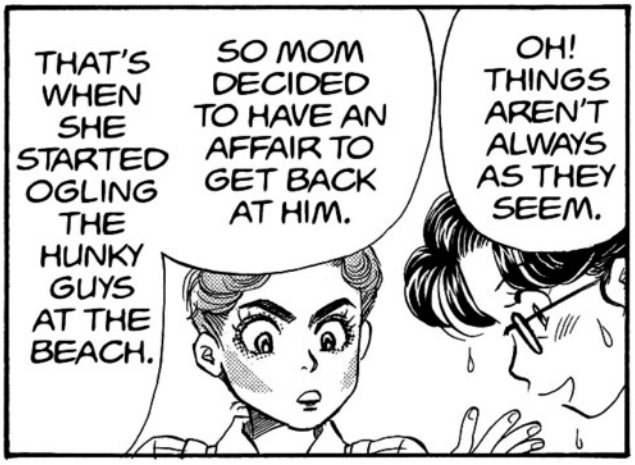


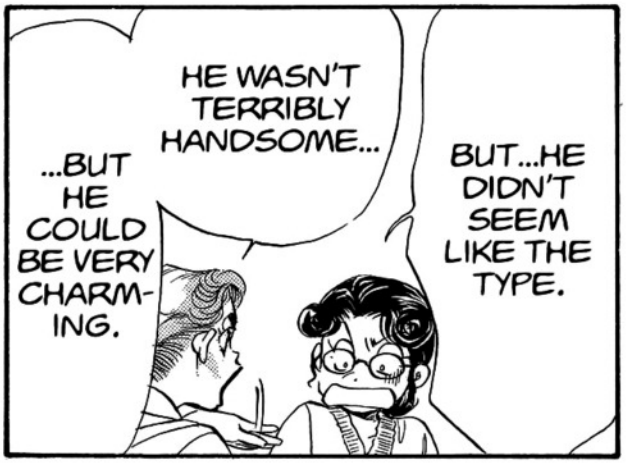


Removing the strings from beans









Author's Note Part 2

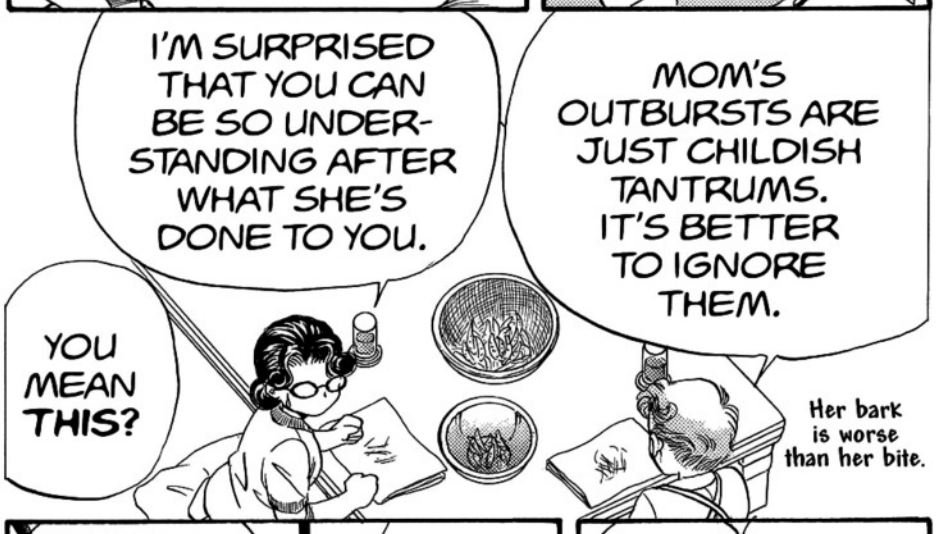
I visited Orlando, Florida in February. Hooray!
We went to Walt Disney World!
I was so tired I slept all the way there, so I didn't suffer from jet lag at all.

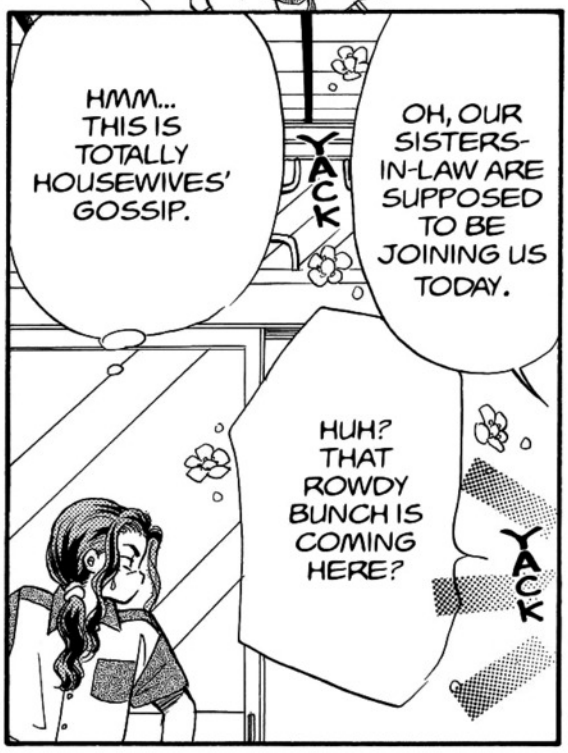
Our Schedule
Day 1: Epcot
↓
Day 2: Disney-MGM Studios
↓
Day 3: Universal Studios
↓
Day 4: The Magic Kingdom

It wasn't terribly crowded, maybe because we went in the middle of the week. (We still had to wait 60 minutes for the Twilight Zone Tower of Terror at Disney-MGM Studios.)

I'll tell you what I thought of the rides and attractions in upcoming Author's Notes.

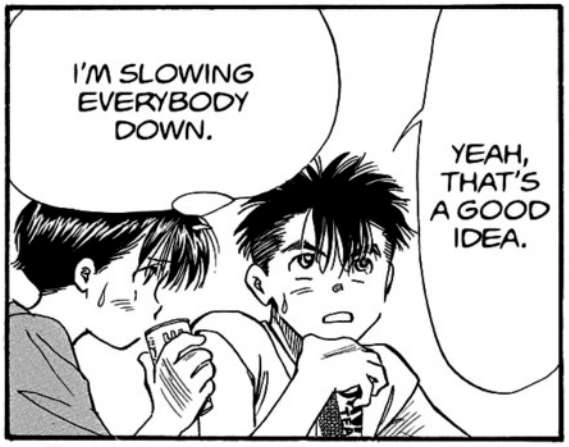
Continued in Part 3

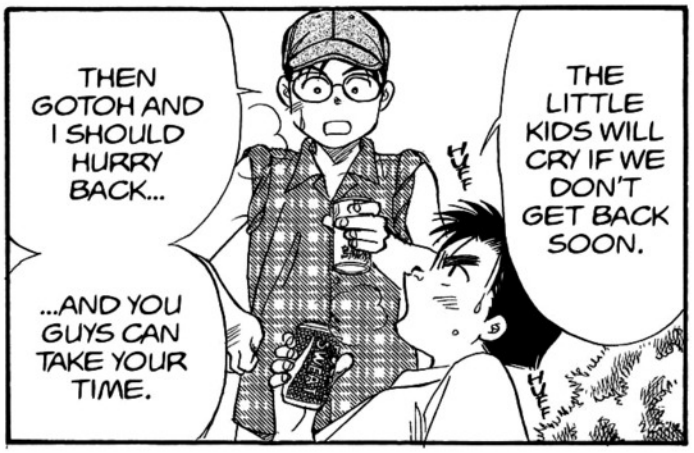


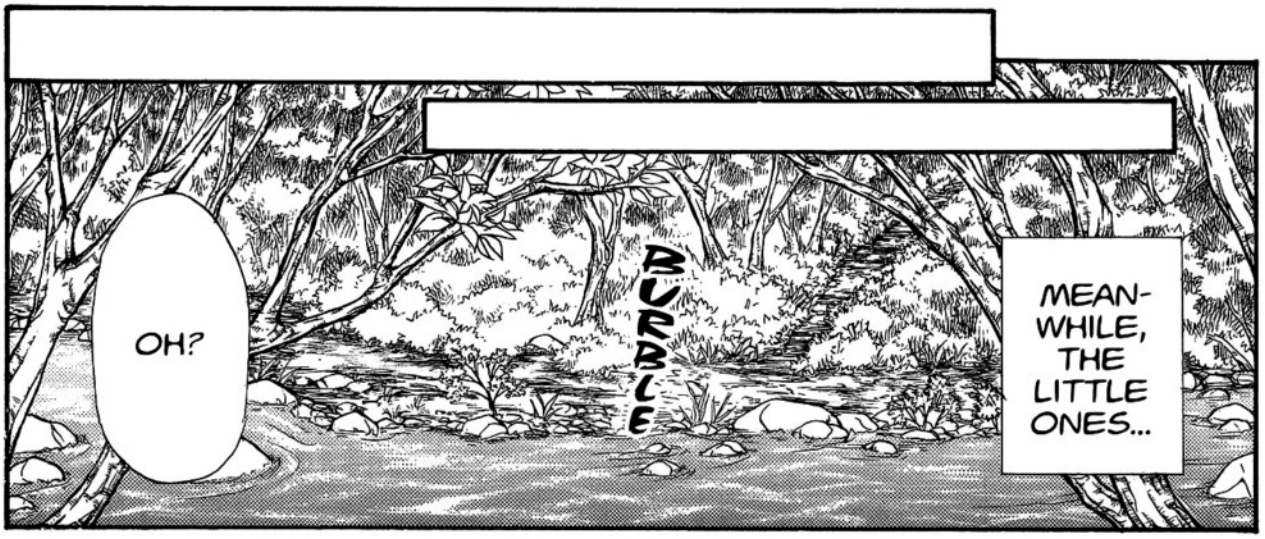


WE SHOULD'VE BROUGHT SOME TOWELS.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, FUJII?
GLUG GLUG GLUG
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
JUICE
SODA

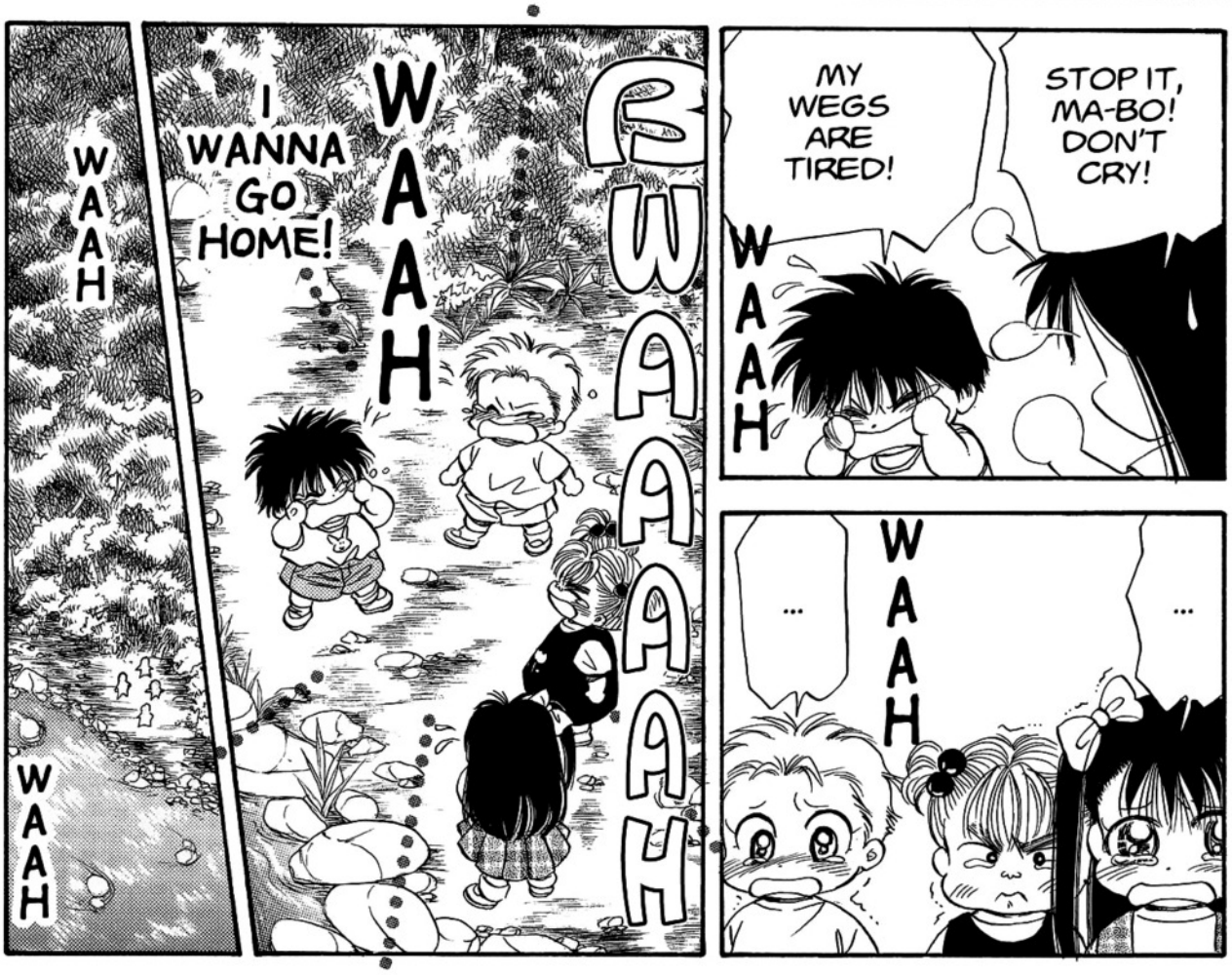
REE
REE
CHIRRUP
HUFF
IT'S SO HOT.

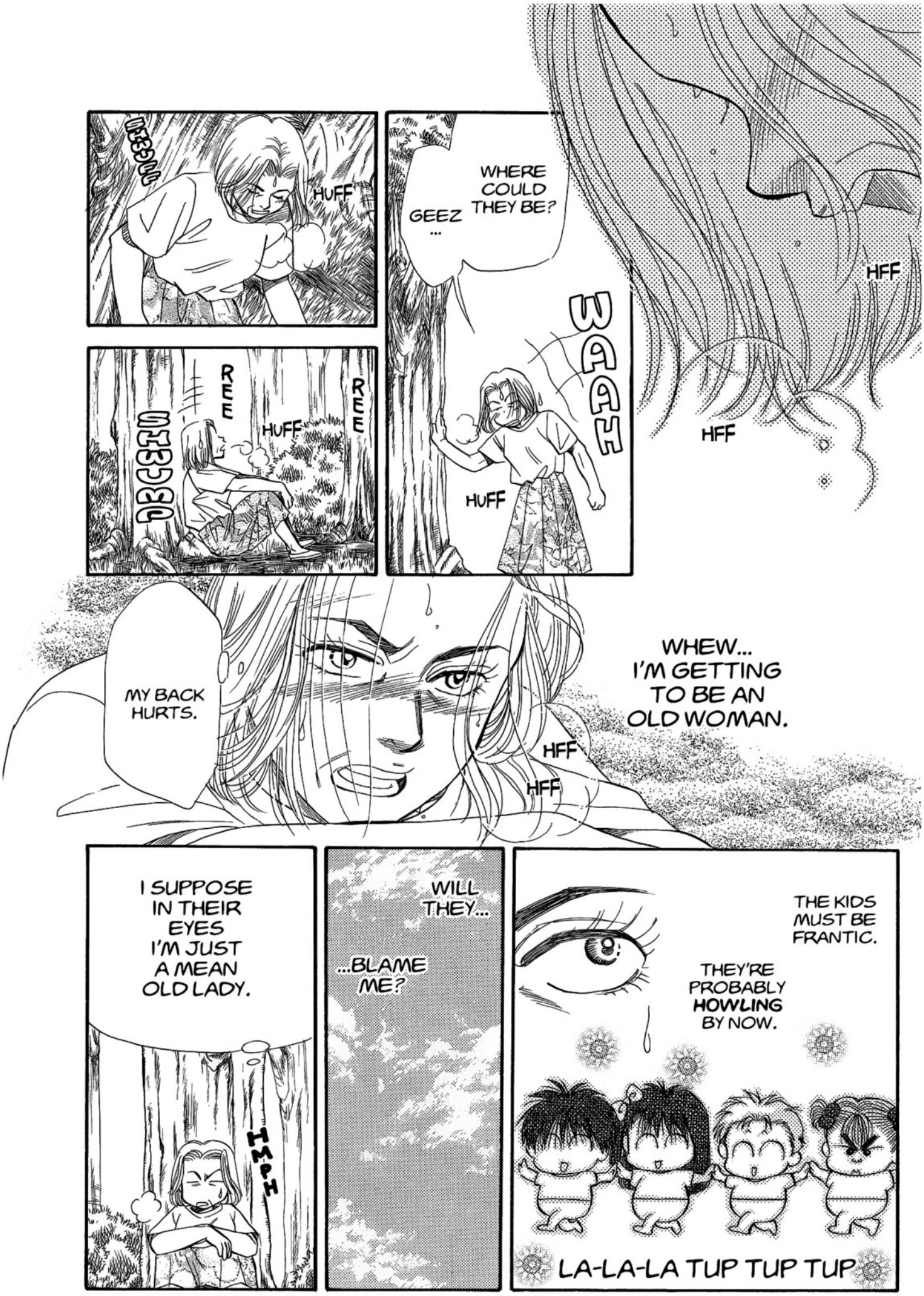

I'M SLOWING EVERYBODY DOWN.
YEAH, THAT'S A GOOD IDEA.


THEN GOTOH AND I SHOULD HURRY BACK...
...AND YOU GUYS CAN TAKE YOUR TIME.
THE LITTLE KIDS WILL CRY IF we DON'T GET BACK SOON.
HUFF
HUFF


OH?
BURBLE
MEAN-WHILE, THE LITTLE ONES...

I WANNA GO HOME!!
WAAAH
SOB...
UBB...
HEY, THIS ISN'T THE PATH.
NOPE.
BURBLE


WAAH
I WANNA GO HOME!
WAAH
WAAAAAH
MY WEGS ARE TIRED!
STOP IT, MA-BO! DON'T CRY!
WAAH
...
WAAH
...

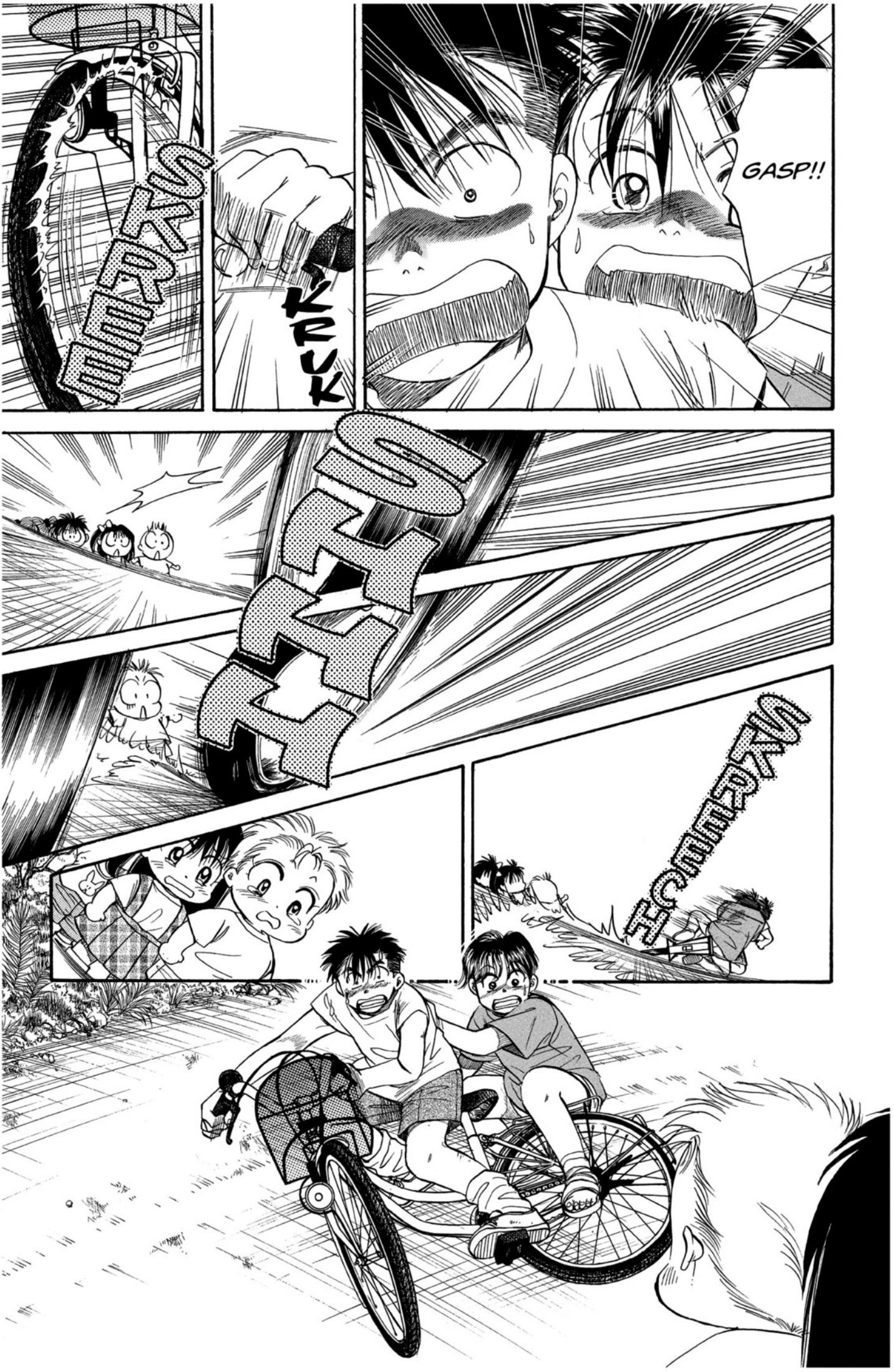

HUFF
HUFF
GEEZ ...
WHERE COULD THEY BE?
WAAH
HUFF
HFF
HFF
REE
HUFF
REE
MY BACK HURTS.
WHEW... I'M GETTING TO BE AN OLD WOMAN.
HFF
HFF
I SUPPOSE IN THEIR EYES I'M JUST A MEAN OLD LADY.
HMPH
WILL THEY...
...BLAME ME?
THE KIDS MUST BE FRANTIC.
THEY'RE PROBABLY HOWLING BY NOW.
LA-LA-LA TUP TUP TUP

WHAT?
GRANDMA TOOK THE KIDS FOR A WALK? ARE YOU SURE THEY'RE OKAY?
WHY WOULDN'T THEY BE?
B-BUT SHE CAN'T STAND LITTLE KIDS!
REE
REE
I HOPE SHE'S NOT TERROR-IZING THEM.
C'MON. SHE'S NOT THAT BAD.
YES, SHE IS!!
YEAH!
YOU DON'T KNOW HER! SHE'S A WICKED OLD WOMAN!!
DOOM

LISTEN TO ME!
Yeah.
JUST LIKE THEIR MOTHER.
MY AUNTS HAVE STRONG OPINIONS.
YAP YAP
SHE IS A CHILD.
YAP
YAP
SHE'S LIKE A MEAN, SELFISH CHILD!
WAIT... THAT'S NOT TRUE!
U-UMIKO! SORAKO! WHEN DID YOU GET HERE?
REE
REE
?!
WAAH WAAH
SHUFF SHUFF
SOB... SOB...
WAH
WAH
!!
WHUP
WHAP

WAAAAH
RUSTLE
WAAAAH
CHEEP?
FUJII, LOOK. THE SKY'S BRIGHT RED.
THE SUN'S SETTING.
WE'D BETTER HURRY. IT'LL BE DARK SOON.
IT'S DOWN-HILL FROM HERE. HOP ON, TAKUYA.
FWAP
WAAAAH

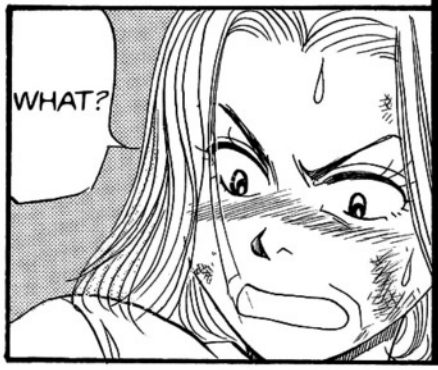
F-FUJII!
SHOOM
AH!
BATBUMP
HERE WE GO!
WHOA! HE'S NOT BRAKING!
DON'T WORRY! THERE AREN'T ANY CARS AROUND!
SHOOM
WE'RE GOING TOO FAST!
!
LOOM
OH NO!
HE'S A MANIAC!!
SHOOM
OF COURSE, WE'D BE IN TROUBLE IF SOMETHING POPPED UP RIGHT IN FRONT OF US.


GASP!!
KRUK
SKRRRR
SKRRRRRR
SKREEEEEEK

WHA...
WHAT?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
...
HUFF
HUFF
WAAAAAAAH
WHUMP
HEY!!
AAH!!
WAAAAH
WHAT HAPPENED?
HOW'D THEY END UP WITH YOU?

NOT YET.
NO. ISN'T SHE BACK YET?
WASN'T GRANDMA WITH THEM?
DROOP
Hiro
WE'RE HOME.
DROOP
OH, NO! GRANNY MUST BE LOST TOO.
Oh, dear.
SHE MUST'VE HAD AN ACCIDENT!
SHE CAN'T BE!
LIMP
LIMP
HUH?
LOOK!
MIS-SING!
NO! SHE'S MISSING?
HITOSHI! IS GRANDMA BACK YET?

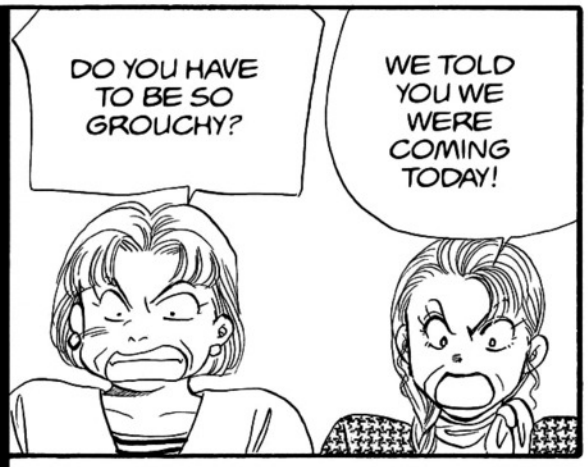
...
...SAFE.
THEY'RE ALL...
OH!
PLOD
MORIGUCHI
PLOD
GRANDMA, WEREN'T YOU WATCHING THE KIDS?
THOSE KIDS ARE A MENACE!
I'VE HAD IT!
MRS. MORIGUCHI, THERE'S BLOOD ON YOUR ARM! DID YOU FALL?
LEAVE ME ALONE!
WHUP



THAT'S NOT TRUE!

IF YOU WERE NICE TO THEM...

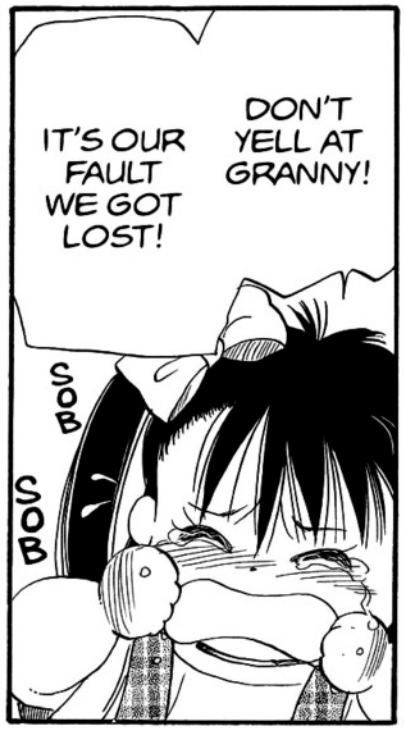
...I'M SURE...

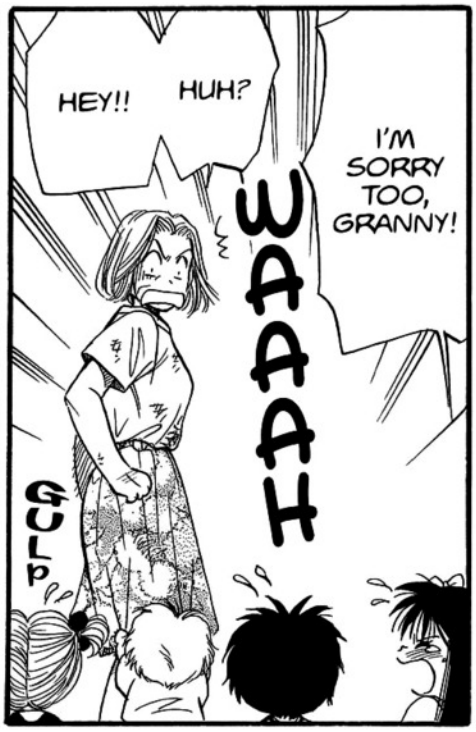


I SOWEE.

I SOWEE.

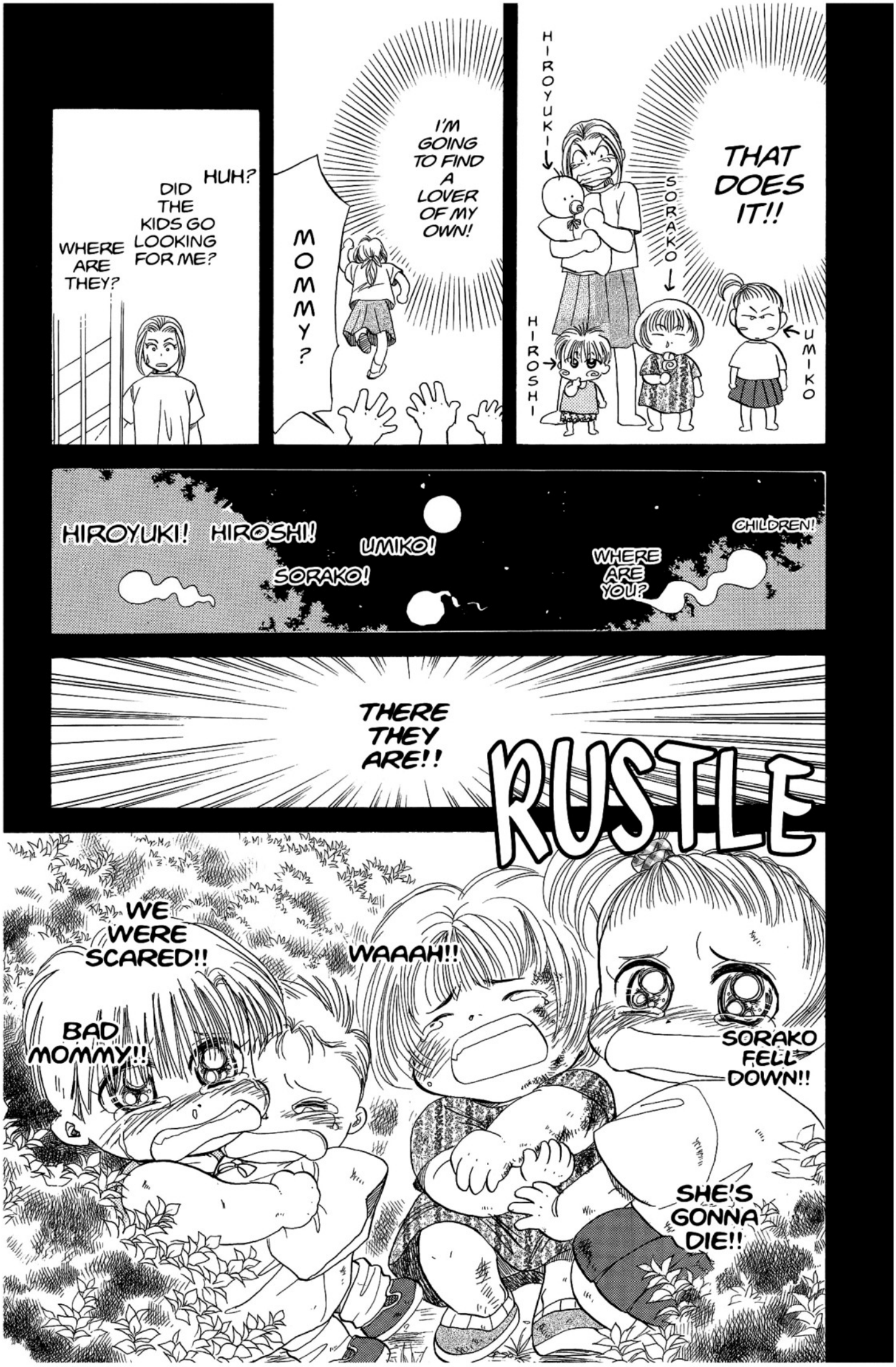
I SOWEE.



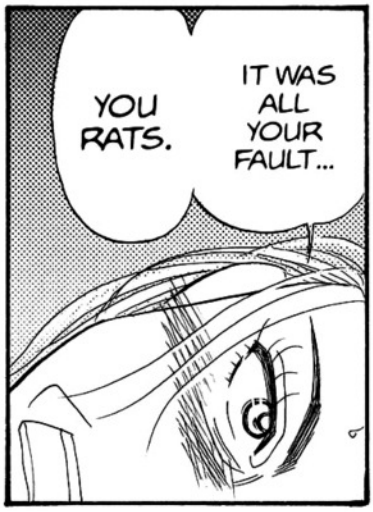


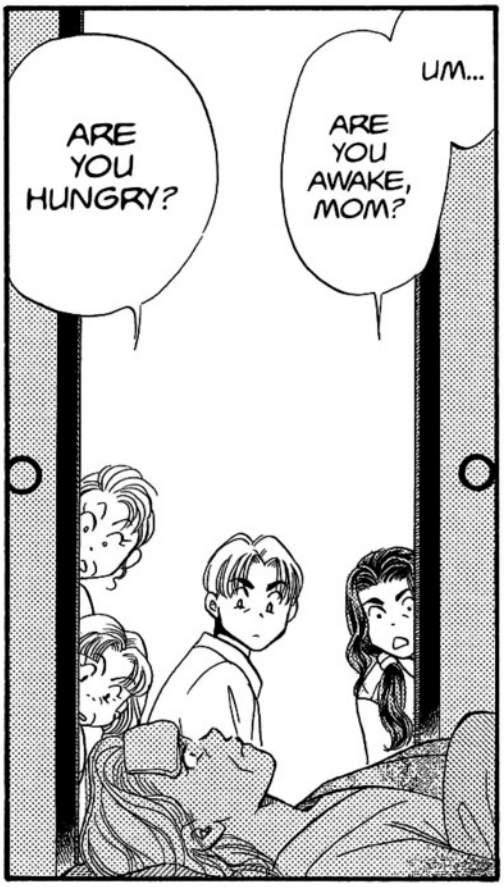
THEY FEEL SORRY FOR ME?
SWIP
...
MINORU, MRS. MORIGUCHI IS TIRED. WE SHOULD LET HER REST.
HUH?
PLIP

I'M GOING TO BED.
TOMP
TOMP
MOTHER ...
I CAN'T TAKE ANY MORE KIDS TODAY!
SHE'S ALWAYS SO GROUCHY.
HUFF
SHE'S A STUBBORN OLD WOMAN.
SHE SURE IS.
YACK
YACK
YACK
ONOMIYAKI
ICE SHAVED
TINKLE
BOOM BOOM
BANG BANG
TINKLE
FWASH
WHAT?
HIROMASA IS HAVING ANOTHER AFFAIR?
TINKLE
TINKLE

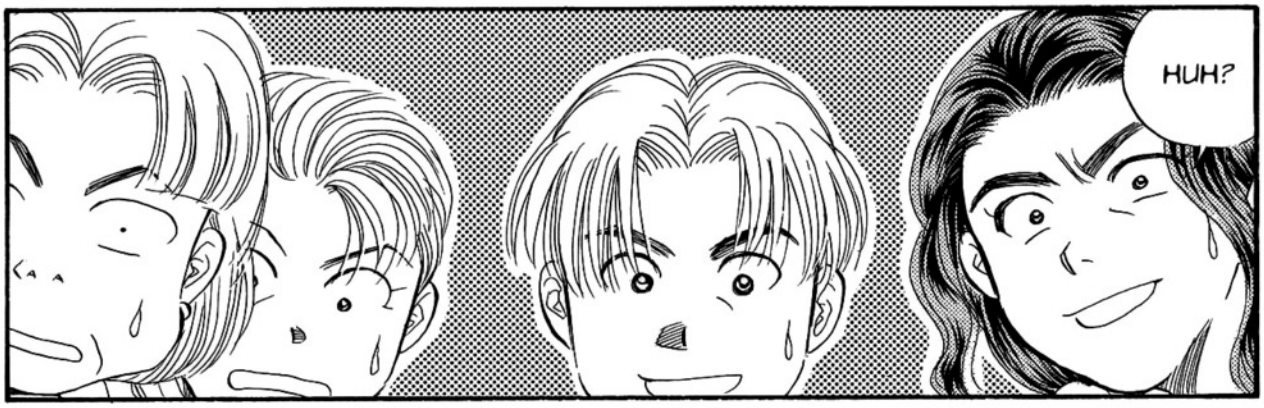

WHERE ARE THEY?
DID THE KIDS GO LOOKING FOR ME?
HUH?
MOMMY?
I'M GOING TO FIND A LOVER OF MY OWN!
HIROYUKI
SORAKO
HIROSHI
UMIKO
THAT DOES IT!!
HIROYUKI!
HIROSHI!
UMIKO!
SORAKO!
WHERE ARE YOU?
CHILDREN!
THERE THEY ARE!!
RUSTLE
WE WERE SCARED!!
WAAAH!!
BAD MOMMY!!
SORAKO FELL DOWN!!
SHE'S GONNA DIE!!

...

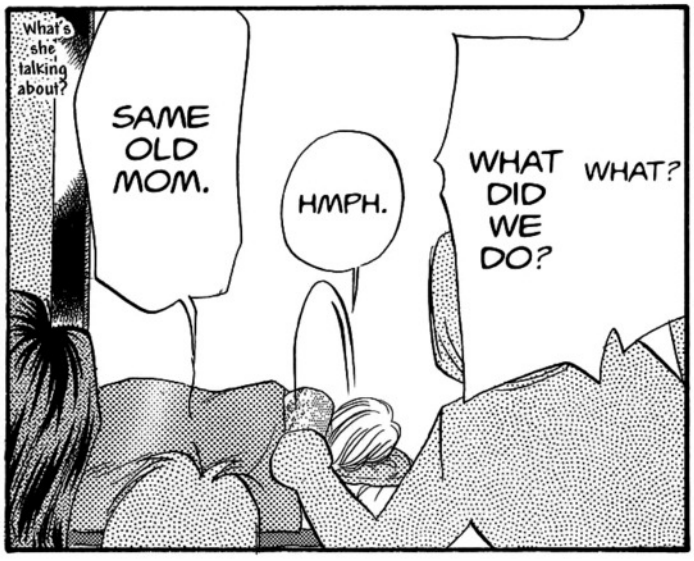

YOU RATS.
IT WAS ALL YOUR FAULT...


ARE YOU HUNGRY?
UM... ARE YOU AWAKE, MOM?

BAD MOMMY!!


HUH?

KLAK
WE'RE HOME!
TWITCH
THERE WERE LOTS OF PEOPLE AT THE FESTIVAL!
YACK YACK


What's she talking about?
SAME OLD MOM.
HMPH.
WHAT DID WE DO?
WHAT?

CHILD
CANDY...
GRILLED CORN...
GOLD-FISH SCOOP-ING*...
MRS. MORI-GUCHI...
HERE.
THIS IS FOR YOU.
HEWE.
THE FESTI-VAL?
IT WAS TONIGHT! I MISSED IT!!
*A festival game in which players try to catch goldfish in a paper scoop.
THAT'S JUST JUNK THAT YOU DON'T WANT!!
THIS IS FOR YOU.
I GOT YOU THIS.
GRANDMA, THIS IS FROM ME.
SKELETON KEYCHAIN
LEFTOVER COTTON CANDY
RUBBER SNAKE
WELL, MIDORI TOLD ME YOU LOOK FORWARD TO THE FESTIVAL EVERY YEAR.
A SUCKER... AND A WATER BALLOON?
DIS FO' YOU!
MY WEIRD DAUGHTER-IN-LAW TOLD YOU THAT?
MIDORI DID?

SHALL I CLOSE THE DOOR?
IS IT TOO NOISY?
YACK
YACK

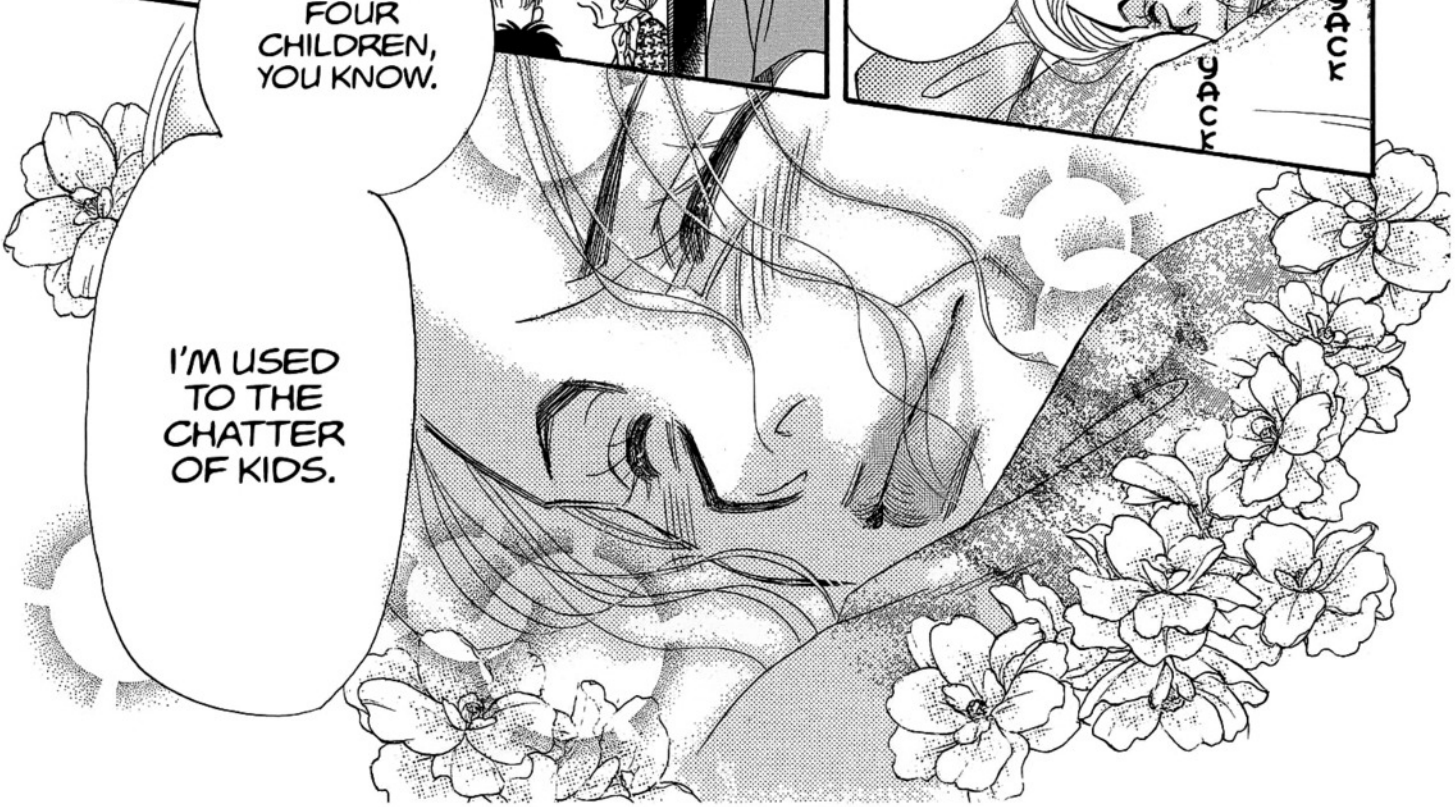
YOU MAY LOOK YOUNG, BUT YOU'RE GETTING OLDER.
I'LL GIVE YOU A MASSAGE.
MY JOINTS!
WOBBLE
YOU DON'T NEED TO TELL ME THAT.

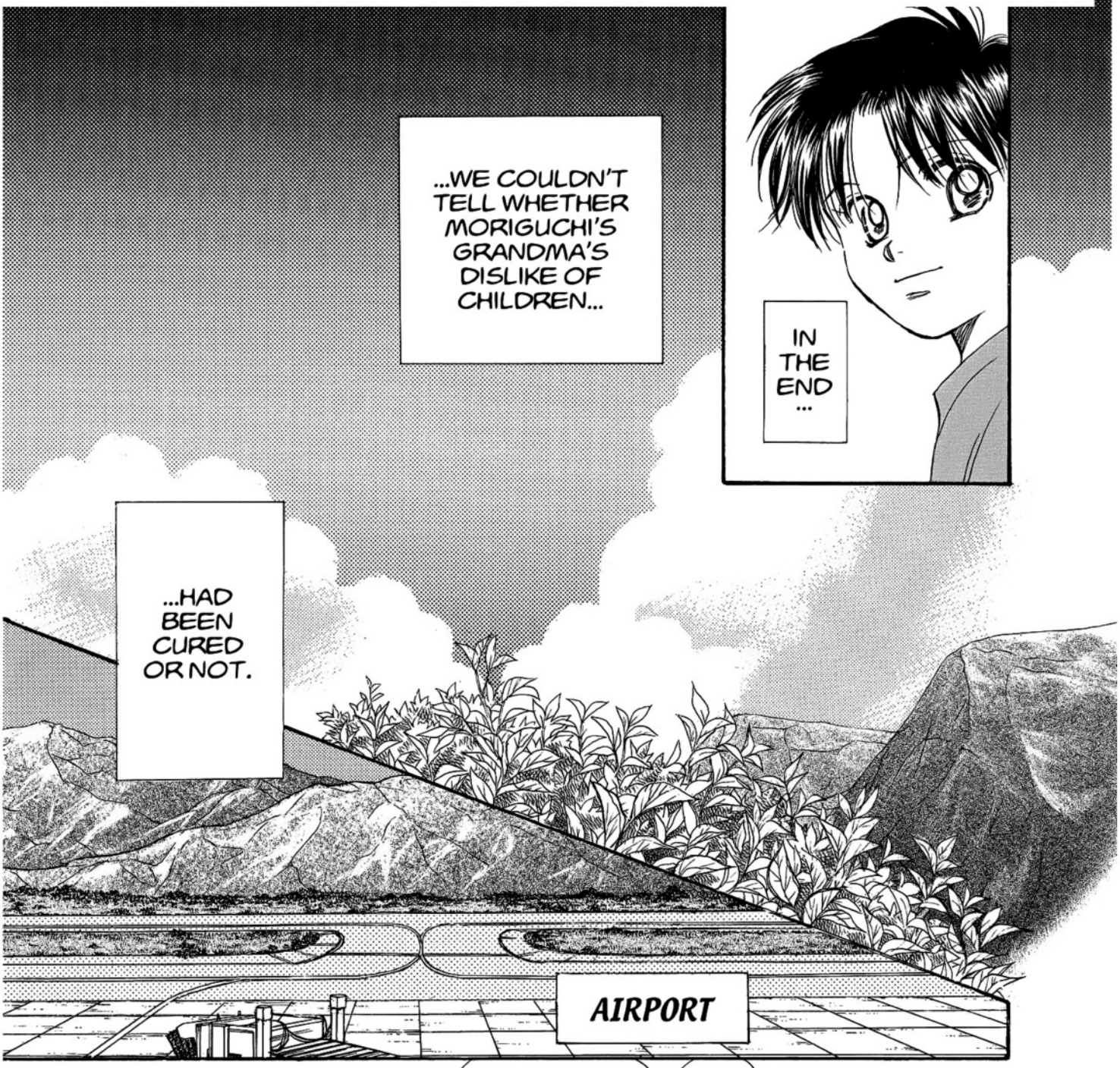
OH!!
KREK
KREK
KREK
KREK

BLAB
BLAB

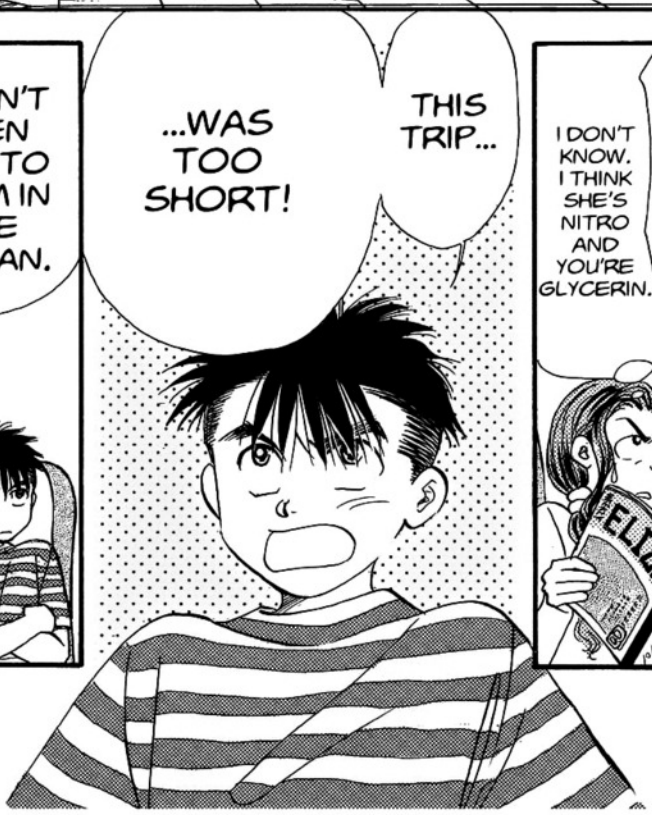
YACK
YACK
...
WHUP

DON'T BE SILLY.
THAT'S NOT NECESSARY.
YACK
YACK


I RAISED FOUR CHILDREN, YOU KNOW.
I'M USED TO THE CHATTER OF KIDS.


IN THE END...
...WE COULDN'T TELL WHETHER MORIGUCHI'S GRANDMA'S DISLIKE OF CHILDREN...
...HAD BEEN CURED OR NOT.
AIRPORT

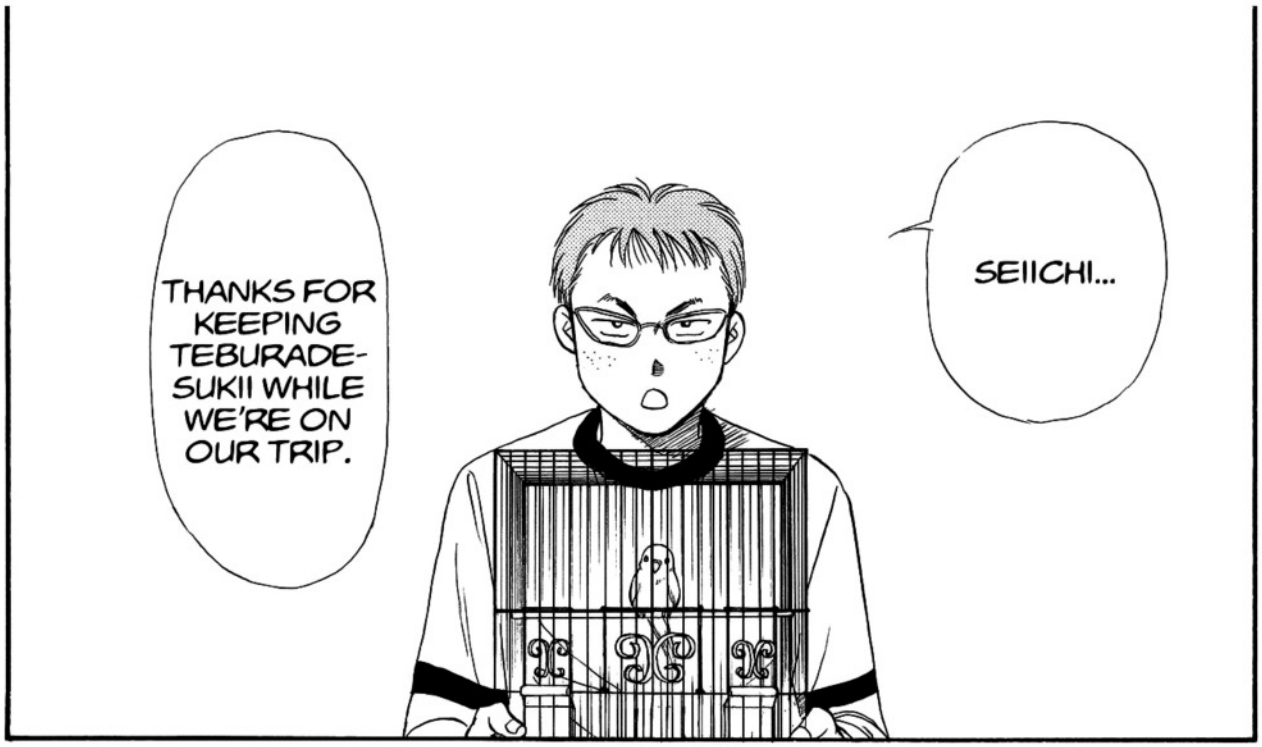
HERE, YOU GUYS.
THAT'S TOO BAD.
I DIDN'T EVEN GET TO SWIM IN THE OCEAN.
MY GRANDMA ASKED ME TO GIVE THIS TO YOU.
HUH?

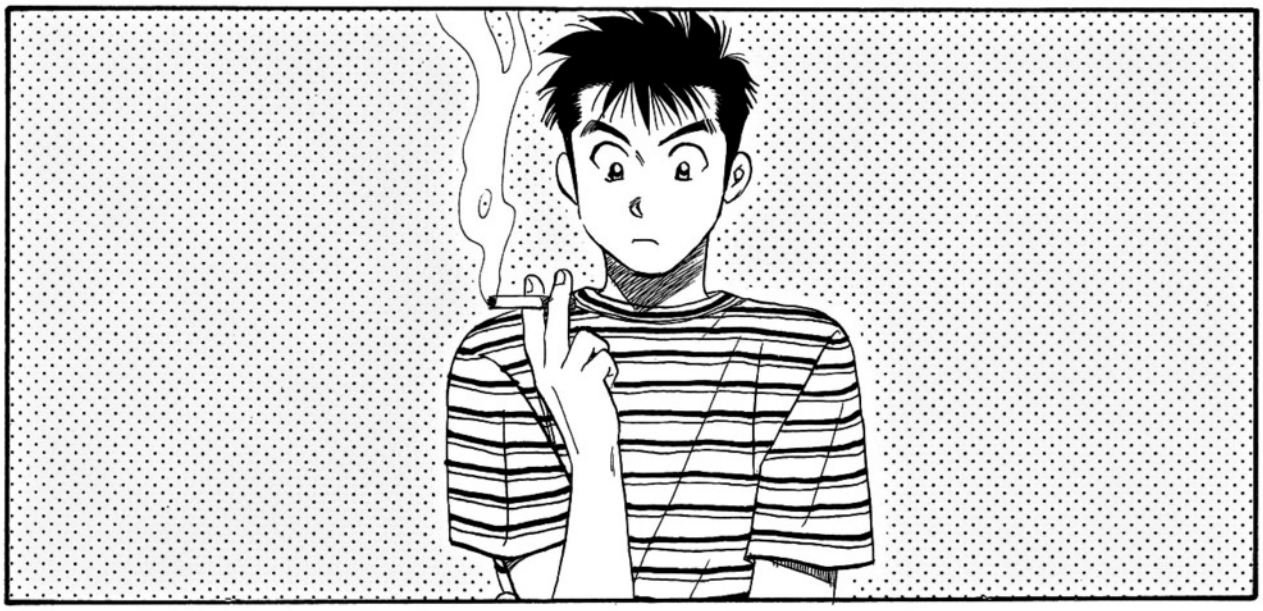

THIS TRIP...
...WAS TOO SHORT!

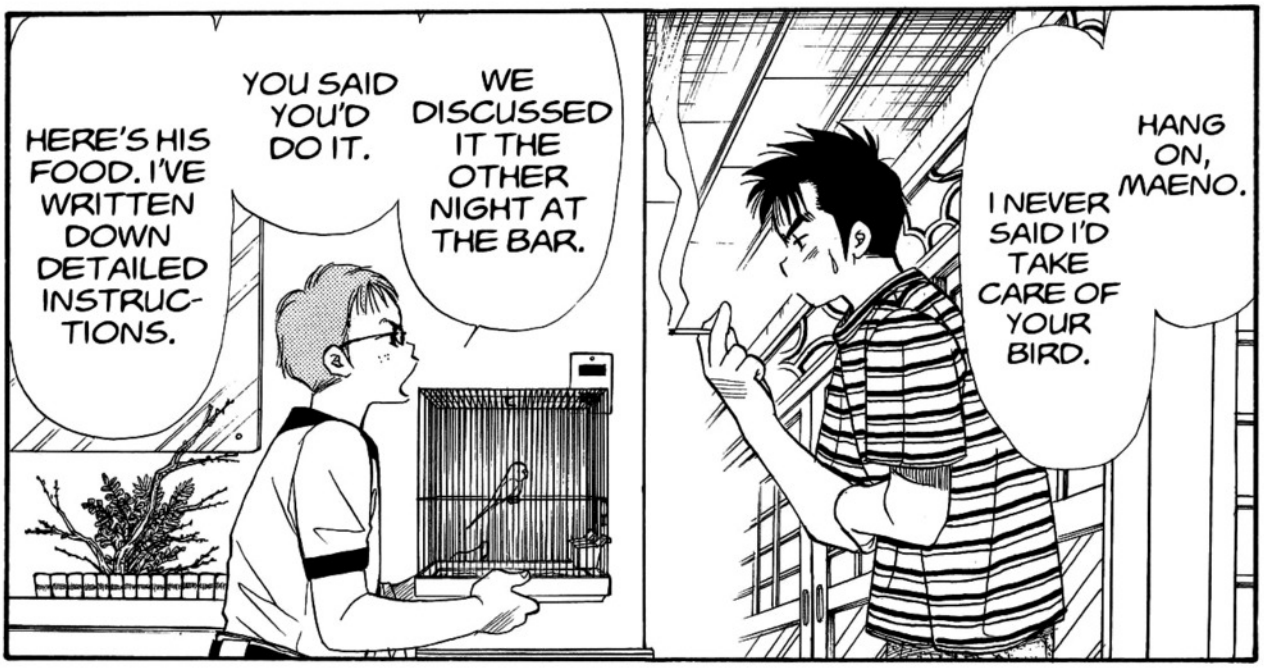
NEXT TIME WE VISIT, I'M GOING TO WIN HER OVER. YOU'LL SEE.
I DON'T KNOW. I THINK SHE'S NITRO AND YOU'RE GLYCERIN.
ELIZA

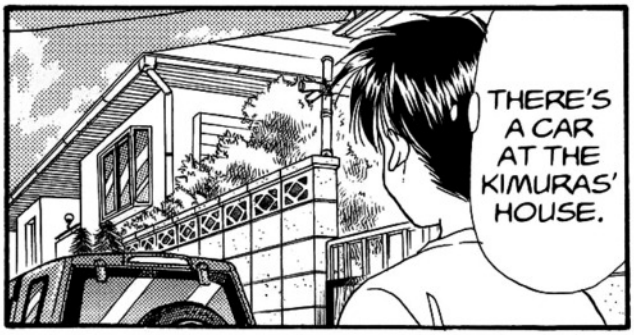
Chapter 87 / The End

BABY & Me
Chapter 88
PEEP
MM...

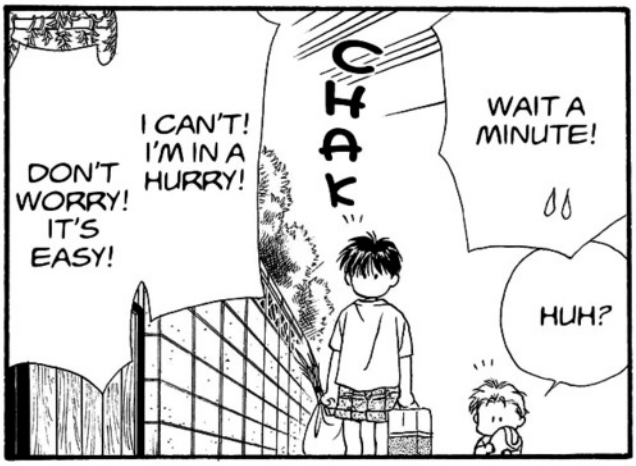

THANKS FOR KEEPING TEBURADE-SUKII WHILE WE'RE ON OUR TRIP.
SEIICHI...

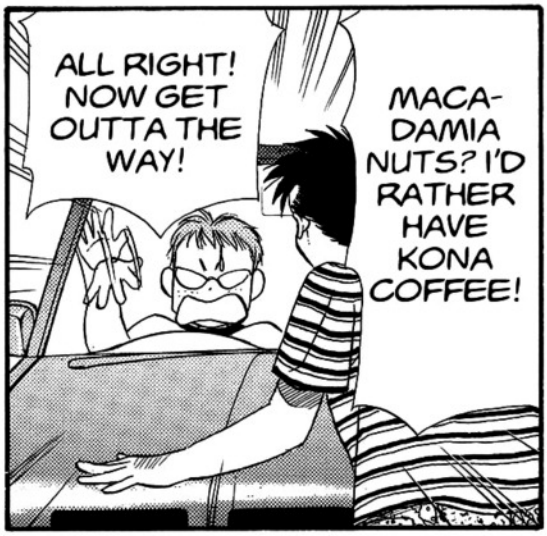


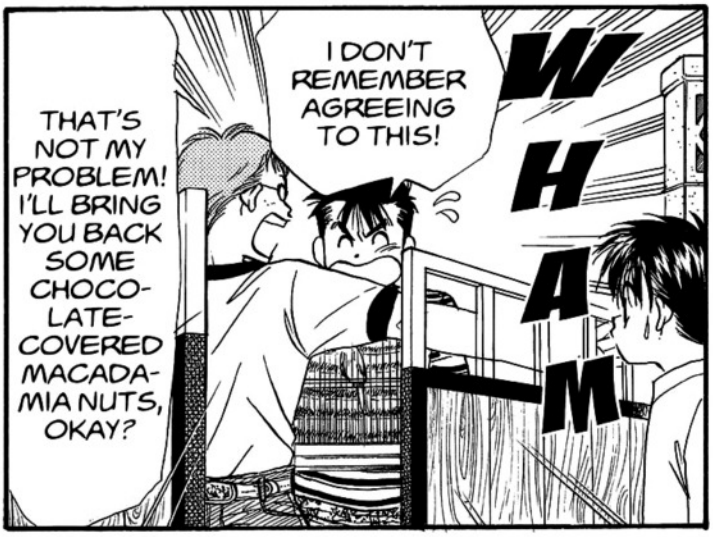

HERE'S HIS FOOD. I'VE WRITTEN DOWN DETAILED INSTRUC-TIONS.
YOU SAID YOU'D DO IT.
WE DISCUSSED IT THE OTHER NIGHT AT THE BAR.
HANG ON, MAENO.
I NEVER SAID I'D TAKE CARE OF YOUR BIRD.

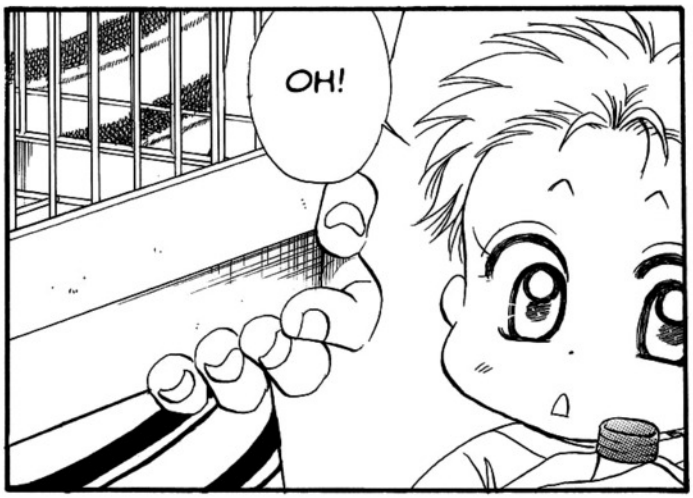

THERE'S A CAR AT THE KIMURAS' HOUSE.

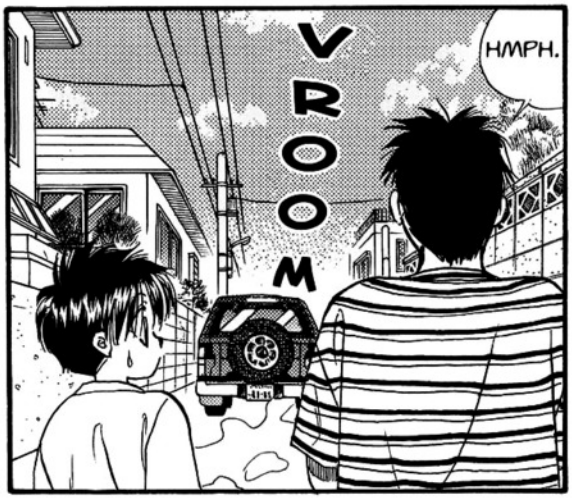
HEY...
UNH...
UNH...

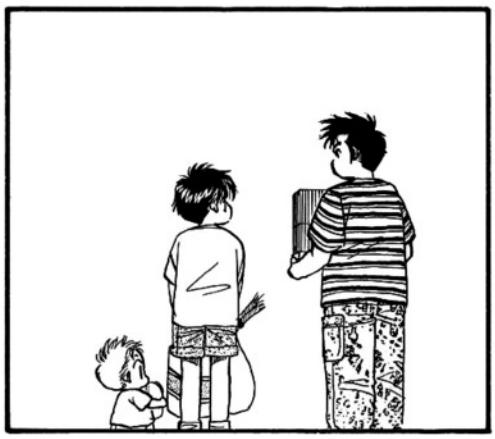

WAIT A MINUTE!
HUH?
CHAK
I CAN'T! I'M IN A HURRY!
DON'T WORRY! IT'S EASY!

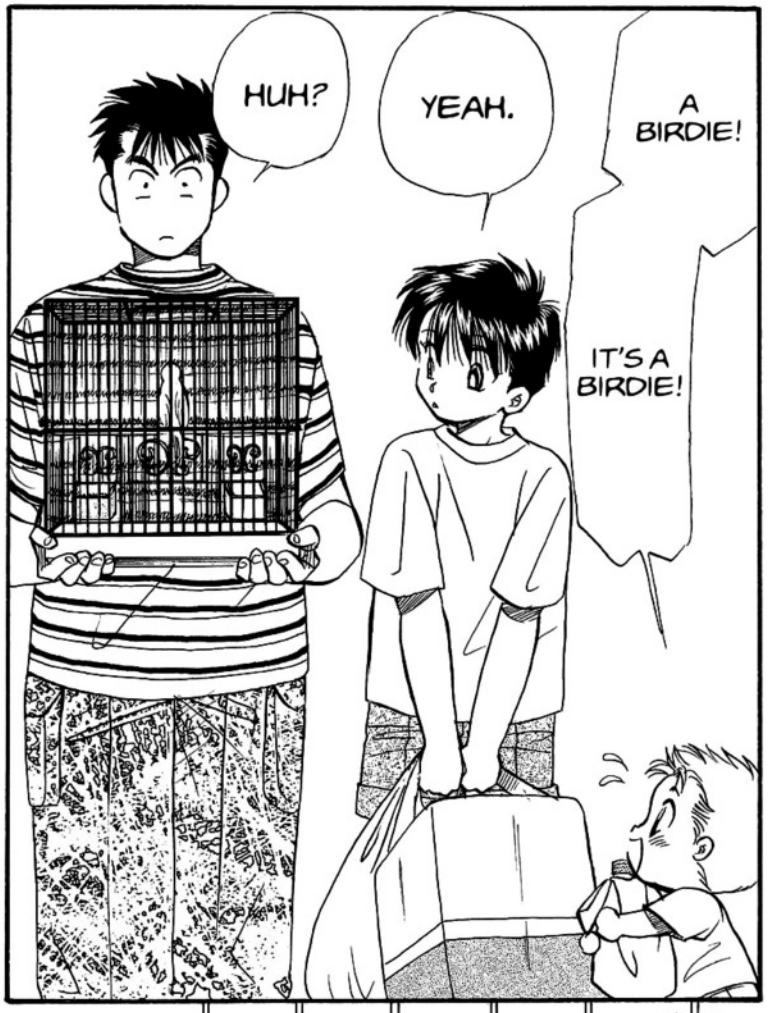

ALL RIGHT! NOW GET OUTTA THE WAY!
MACA-DAMIA NUTS? I'D RATHER HAVE KONA COFFEE!

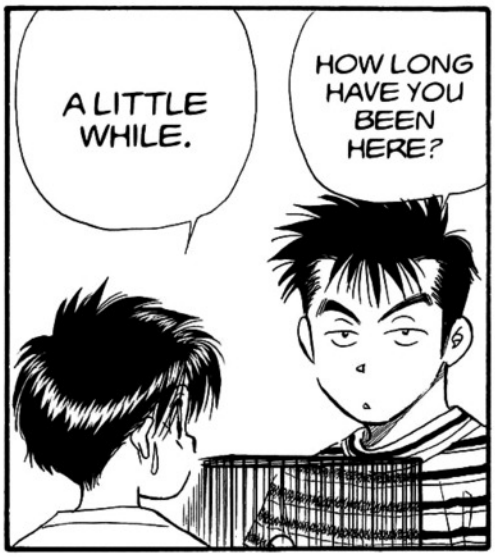

I DON'T REMEMBER AGREEING TO THIS!
THAT'S NOT MY PROBLEM! I'LL BRING YOU BACK SOME CHOCO-LATE-COVERED MACADA-MIA NUTS, OKAY?
WHAM

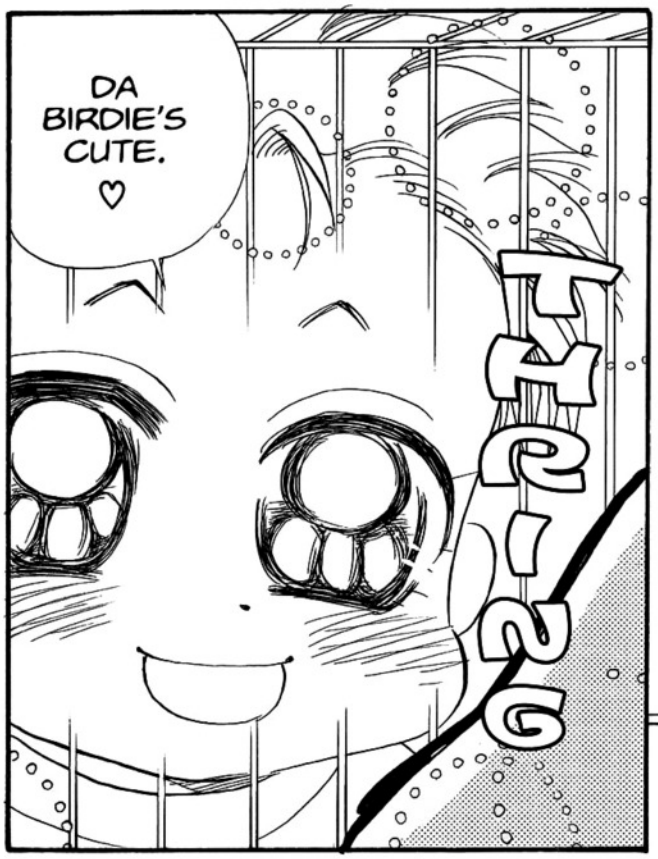

OH!

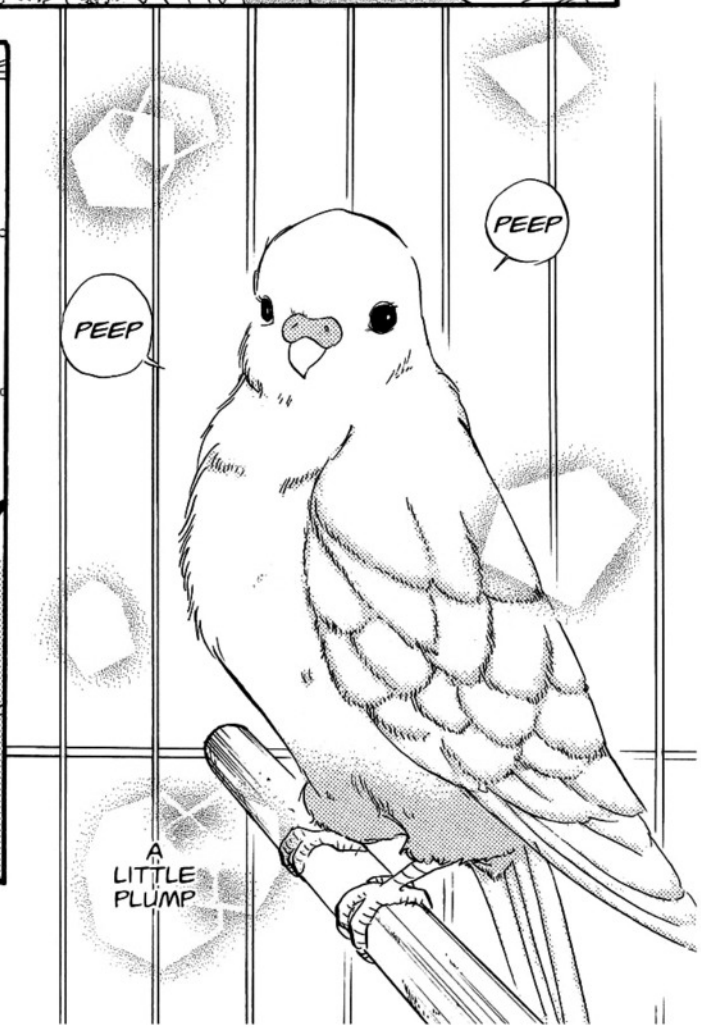

HMPH.
VROOM




HUH?
YEAH.
A BIRDIE!
IT'S A BIRDIE!


A LITTLE WHILE.
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN HERE?


DA BIRDIE'S CUTE. ♡
THUMP


PEEP
PEEP
A LITTLE PLUMP

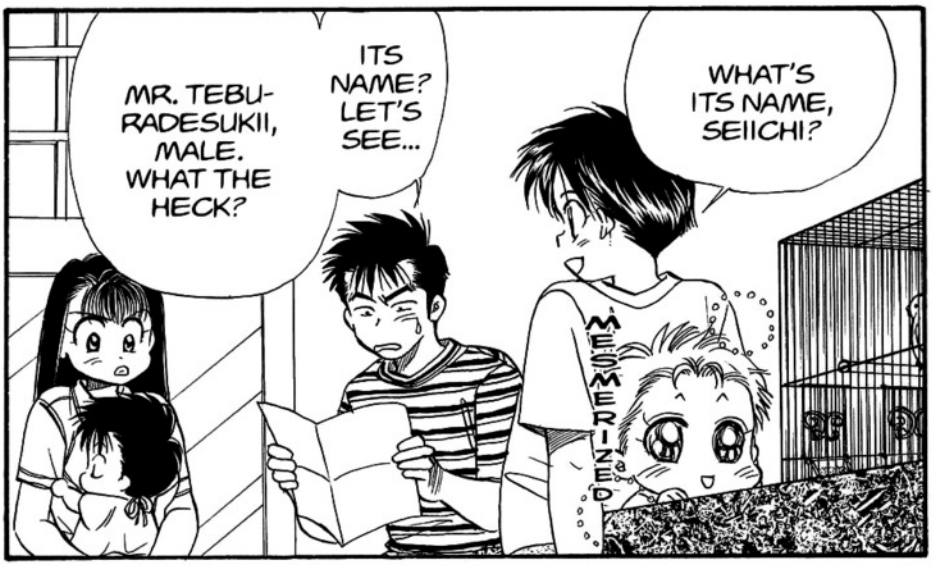
Author's Note Part 3

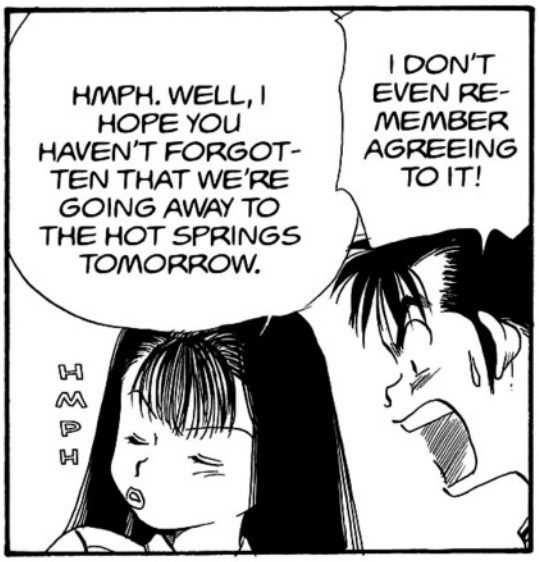
As soon as we reached the hotel, I bought a souvenir cup for $8.50 in the dining room.

I got it because there was a 24-hour bar in the dining room that offered unlimited refills with the cup.

I only had the waiter fill my cup half-way each time (because that's all I could drink), but other people were filling up their cups with coffee or soda. I had breakfast every morning in the dining room, but even though it was a buffet, we had to tell the staff what we wanted to eat — and my English isn't very good.

Continued in Part 4



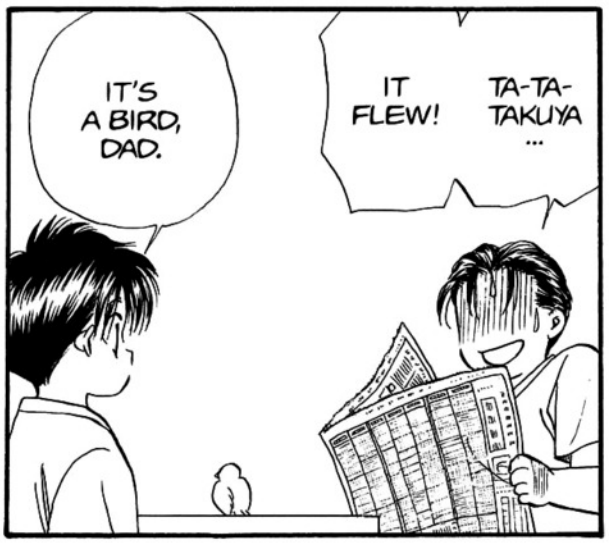


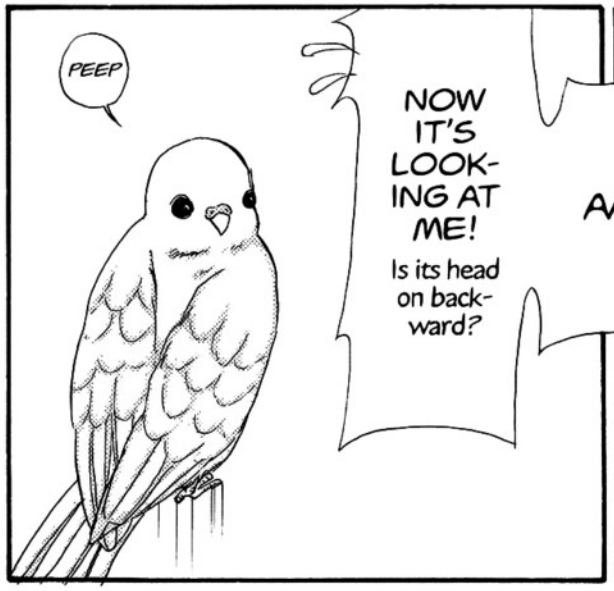
THEN WHY DO YOU LOOK SO SHOCKED?
I DIDN'T FORGET.
WIP
WIP
TUH
DOOM
OH NO! I TO-TALLY FORGOT!
TAKUYA !!
HUH?
THEN ...
SEIICHI HAD DONE IT AGAIN.
WE'LL GET YOU A SOU-VENIR!
...
BIRDIE!
BIRDIE!
HUH?
THANKS!
JUST THE MAN I WAS LOOKING FOR.
FWASH
WHAP
PEEP
PEEP

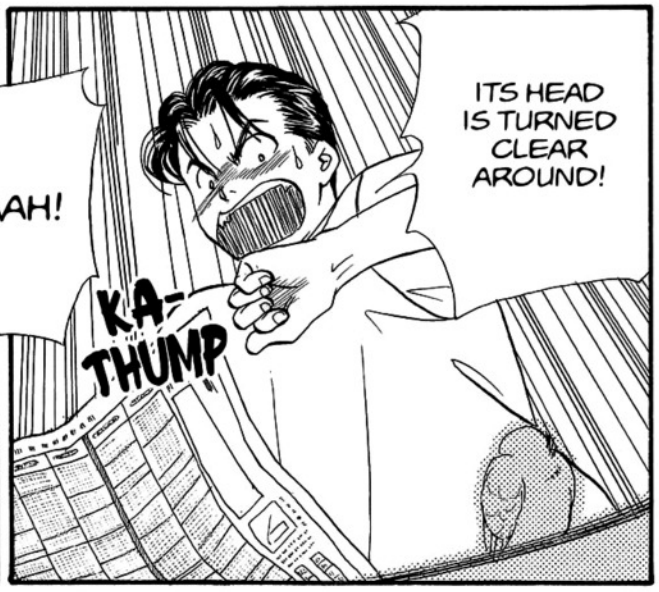
TAKUYA!
SEIICHI'S TAKING ADVANTAGE OF YOU!
...BUT REALLY, MINORU AND I WERE BOTH HAPPY ABOUT IT.
HE FORCED ME TO TAKE THE PARAKEET...
CUTE. GOOD BOY.
YOU SEE? HE'S EXPLOITING YOU!
HE SAID IT WOULD BE EASIER ON EVERYONE.
THEY'RE NOT LEAVING UNTIL TOMORROW, RIGHT? SO WHY DID WE HAVE TO TAKE THE BIRD TONIGHT?
...
TMP
IT CAN'T FLY WELL BECAUSE ITS WINGS ARE CLIPPED.
THUD
!
FWAP FWAP
OH!
AH!

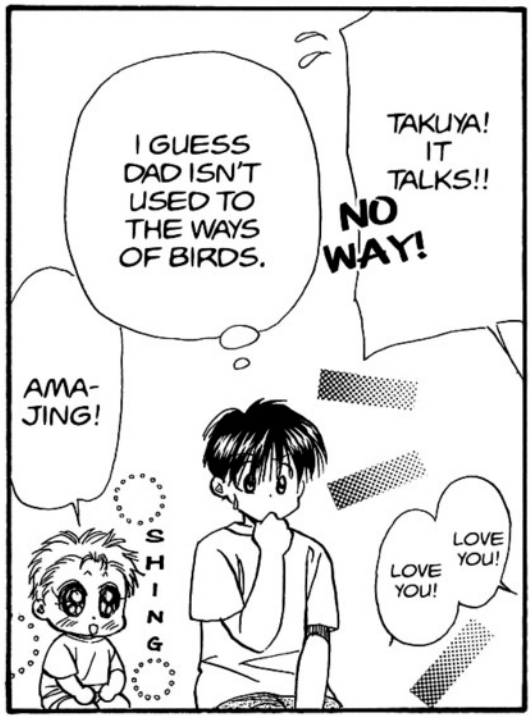
...

GULP
I KNOW THAT, BUT...


IT'S A BIRD, DAD.
IT FLEW!
TA-TA-TAKUYA ...


PEEP
NOW IT'S LOOK-ING AT ME!
Is its head on back-ward?

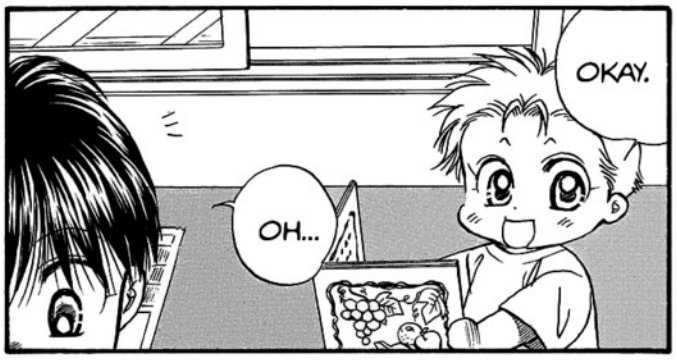

AAH!
KA-THUMP
ITS HEAD IS TURNED CLEAR AROUND!


I GUESS DAD ISN'T USED TO THE WAYS OF BIRDS.
TAKUYA! IT TALKS!!
NO WAY!
AMA-JING!
SHINING
LOVE YOU!
LOVE YOU!

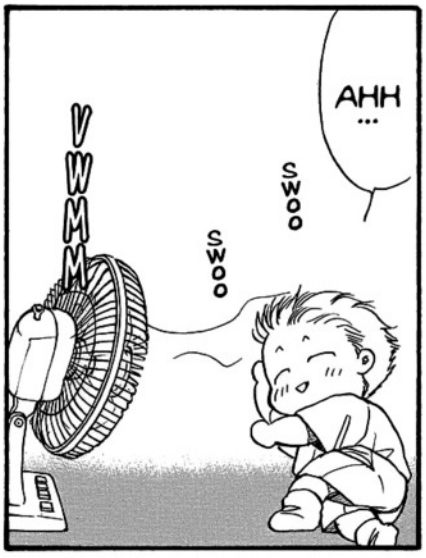
LOVE YOU!

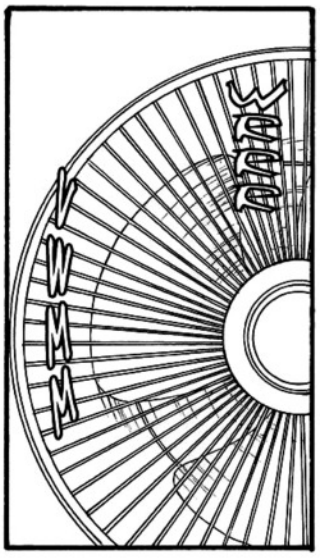
WELL, TAKUYA...
THANKS AGAIN FOR TAKING CARE OF PIIKO.
PEEP!
PEEP!
HAVE A GOOD TRIP!
WE'LL SEE YOU IN A FEW DAYS!
SORRY FOR THE TROUBLE, TAKUYA!
WHATEVER.
IT'S TEBURA-DESUKII, NOT PIIKO.
MINORU! YOU CAN'T TAKE TEBURADESUKII OUT UNLESS THE WINDOWS ARE CLOSED, OKAY?
...THE FIRST FEW DAYS PASSED WITHOUT ANY PROBLEMS.
HUH?
TWITCH
AND SO...
I WISH WE COULD GO SOME-WHERE.
SUMMER VACATION IS ALMOST OVER.
PEEP!
SWUM

HUH?
MINORU, I'M GOING OUT TO MAIL THIS POSTCARD, SO STAY HERE AND BE GOOD, OKAY?


OKAY.
OH...

OKAY.
WHUP
CAN I TRUST HIM?
THAT WAS A LITTLE TOO EASY.

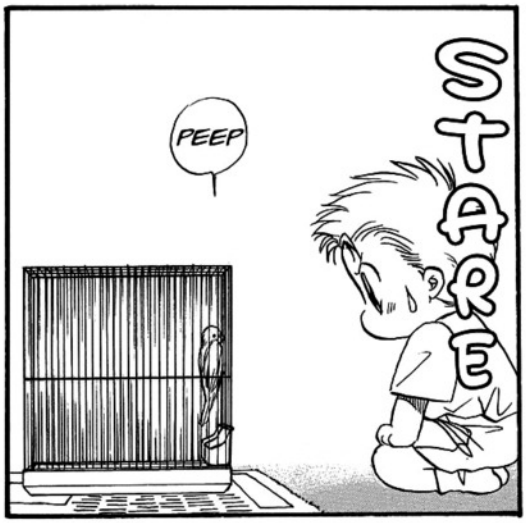

AHH...
SWOO
SWOO
VWMM


VWMM

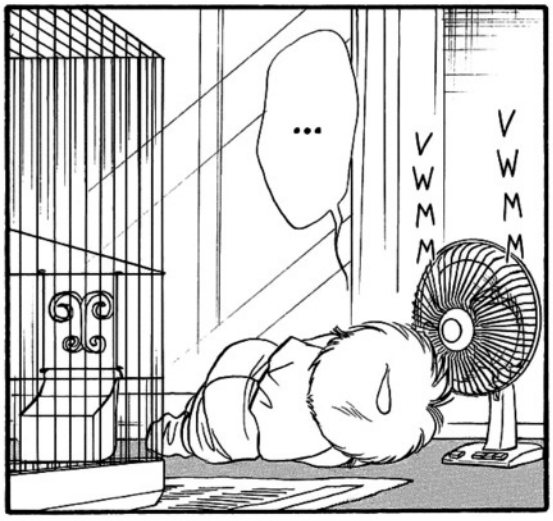
THEN THE ACCIDENT HAPPENED.
Gon,
I hope you're having a great summer.
Takuya Enoki
THERE.

AND DON'T TAKE TEBURADE-SUKII OUT, OKAY?
Mr. Tadashi Gotoh
ABSO-LUTELY NOT. PROMISE?

I WISH YOU'D TAKE ME OUT AND PLAY WITH ME.
KUZK
KUZK
TINK
DON'T YOU WANT TO PET ME?
STARE
FWUMP
...
VWMM
VWMM
DON'T DO IT!!
AH
PEEP
STARE
...


STARE
PEEP

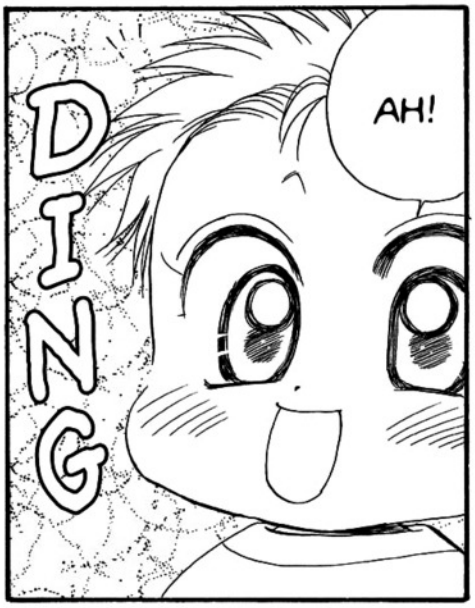
A FEW SECONDS LATER...

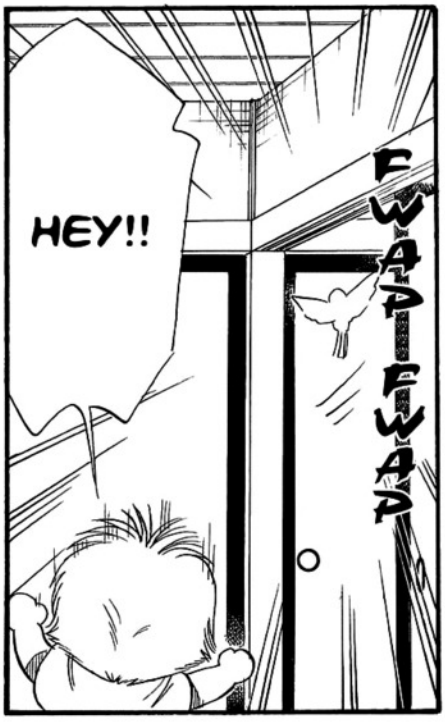

...
VWMM
VWMM

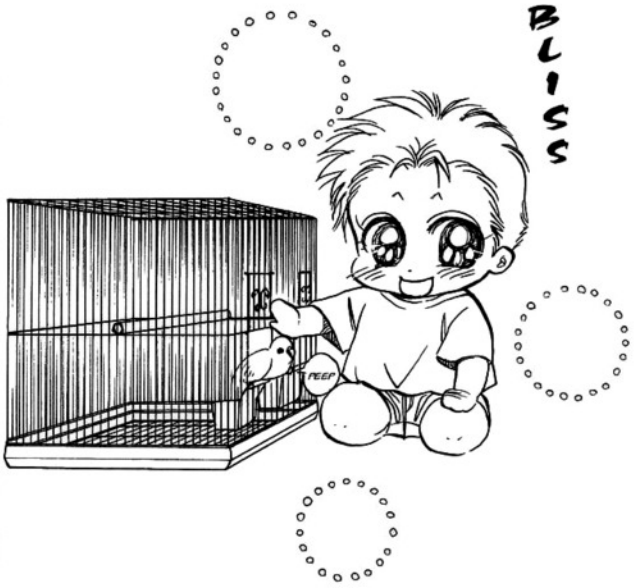
CHAK
AHH... ♡

I CWO-SE IT.
KLAK
I CWOSE IT.

YOU CAN'T TAKE TEBU-RADESUKII OUT UNLESS THE WINDOWS ARE CLOSED, OKAY?


DING
AH!


HEY!!
FWAP FWAP


BLISS
PEEP

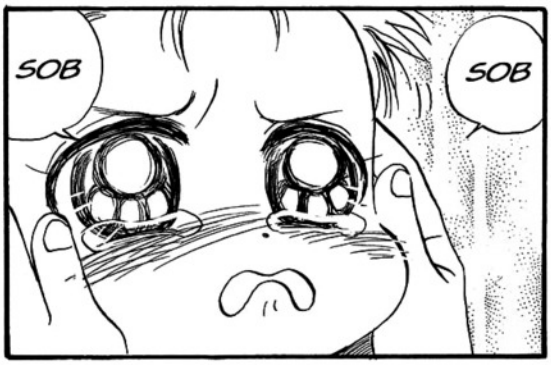
NO!!
DAT'S A NO-NO!!
TMP
TMP
TAK
TAK
FWAP
FWAP
!
WOBBLE
FWUMP

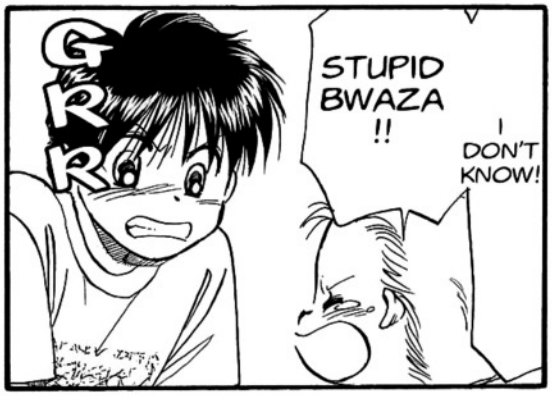
CHOMP
SQUAWK!
PEEP
PEEP
POOM
KLIK
KLIKKLIK
PEEP
PEEP
BIRD
?!
SQUAWK
BDMP
GASP
OH...
HUFF
HUFF
KLICK
HERE
KLANK
KWK
AAH!!
TOMP
KWK
KWK

OH ...
...
THUD
Empty
GRR
MINORU! WHERE'S TEBURADE-SUKII?
I DON' KNOW.
WHAT? BUT YOU WERE HERE THE WHOLE TIME!!
BUU THE BIG EATER
HEY !
LOOK AT ME!
WHUP
WE'RE RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT BIRD! DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT?
ICE CREAM

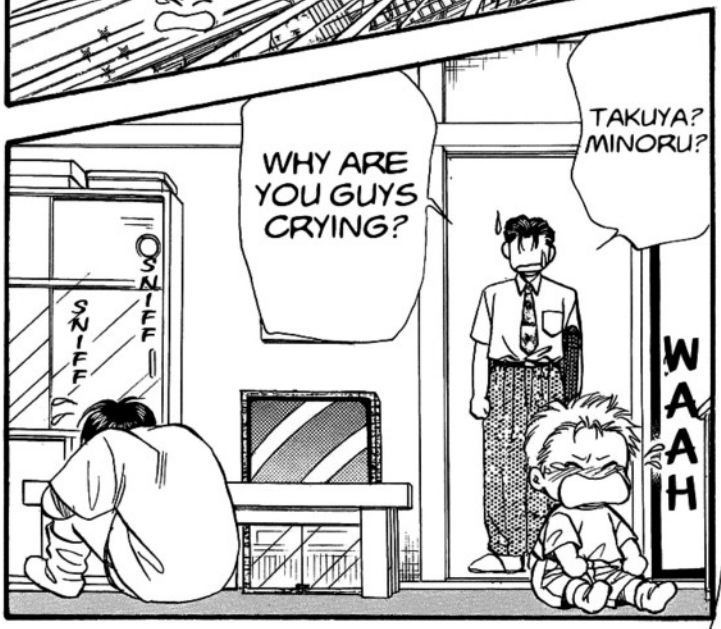
OH...
GAH ...
GAH ...

WHUP
MINORU !!

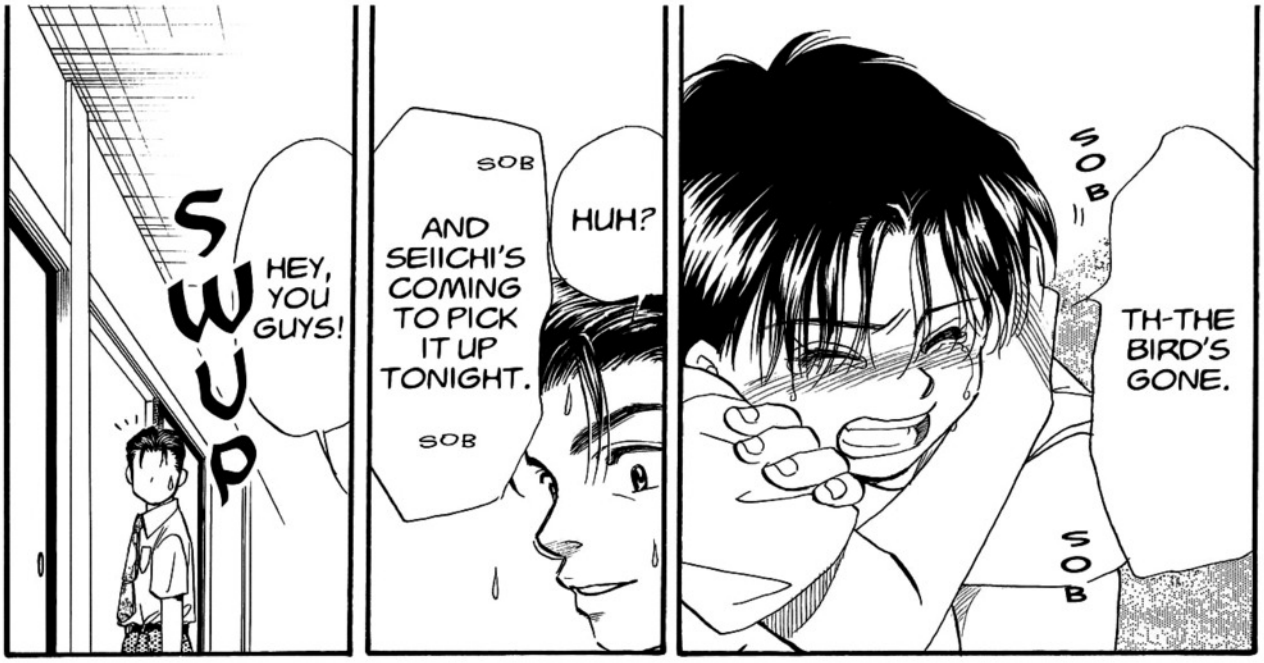

SOB
SOB

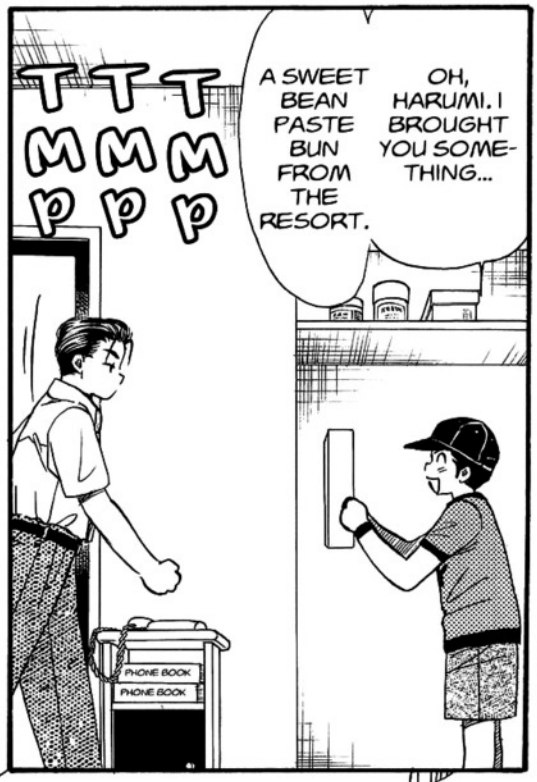

GRR
STUPID BWAZA !!
I DON'T KNOW!

WAAAA
DARN YOU, MINORU!


WHY ARE YOU GUYS CRYING?
TAKUYA? MINORU?
SNIFF
SNIFF
WAAH

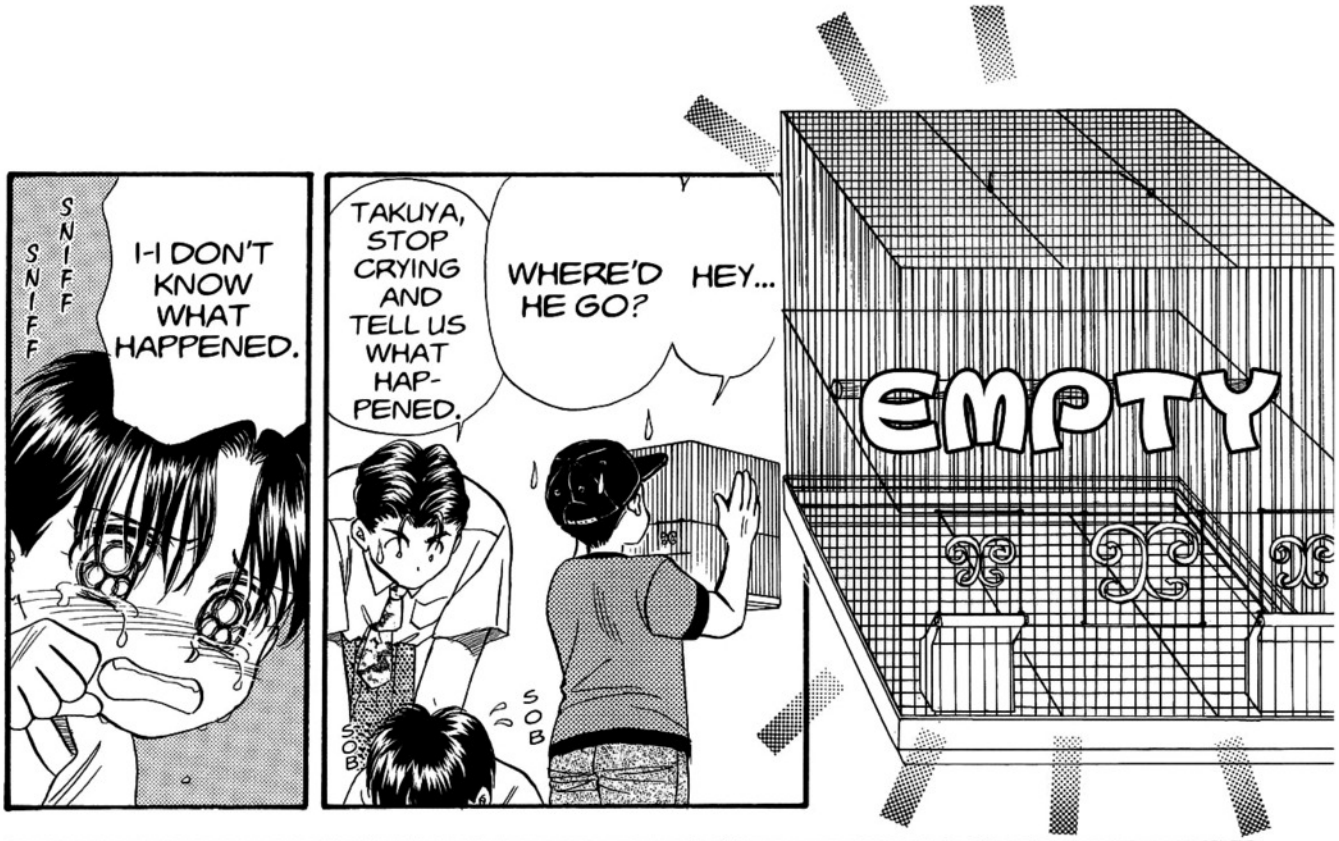
HEY...
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
WAAAH
WAAAH


SWUP
HEY, YOU GUYS!
SOB
AND SEIICHI'S COMING TO PICK IT UP TONIGHT.
SOB
HUH?
SOB
TH-THE BIRD'S GONE.
SOB


TTT MMM ppp
A SWEET BEAN PASTE BUN FROM THE RESORT.
OH, HARUMI. I BROUGHT YOU SOME-THING...
PHONE BOOK
PHONE BOOK

HOW'S PIIKO DOING?
WE'RE BACK FROM OUR TRIP!
BOY

SHUT UP! THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT! YOU ALWAYS GET TAKUYA TO DO YOUR DIRTY WORK!
WH-WHAT WAS THAT FOR?
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
BONK
OUCH!


SNIFF SNIFF
I-I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED.
TAKUYA, STOP CRYING AND TELL US WHAT HAP-PENED.
WHERE'D HE GO?
HEY...
SOB
SOB
EMPTY

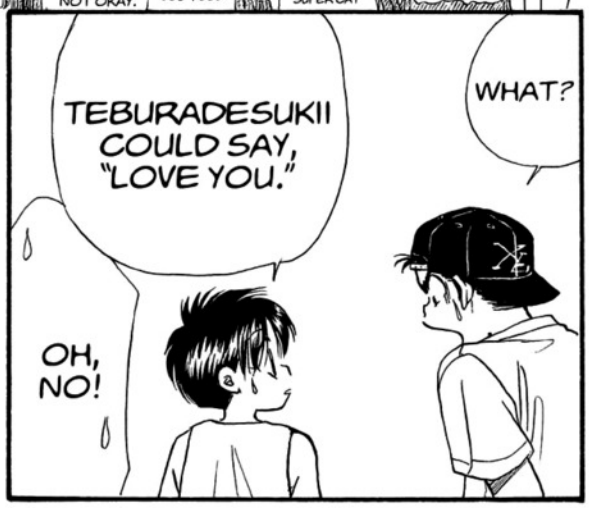
CALM DOWN, YOU TWO.
TAKUYA'S REALLY UPSET.
A GHOS'! A GHOS' GET HIM!
GWAAH
STOP IT, MINORU! TELL THE TRUTH!!

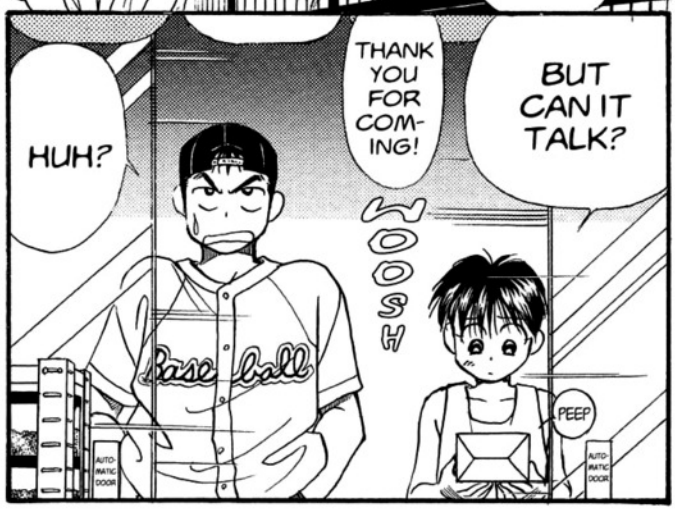
NOT ME! WOBBER COME!
YOU DON'T? WELL, WHAT ABOUT MINORU?
SOB
SOB
HIC
HIC

YOU TWO ARE TOTALLY IRRESPON-SIBLE.
GOOD IDEA.
WE COULD BUY A DUPLICATE BIRD.
SNIFF
SNIFF
The buns they brought
SOB
SOB
CHOMP
SLURP

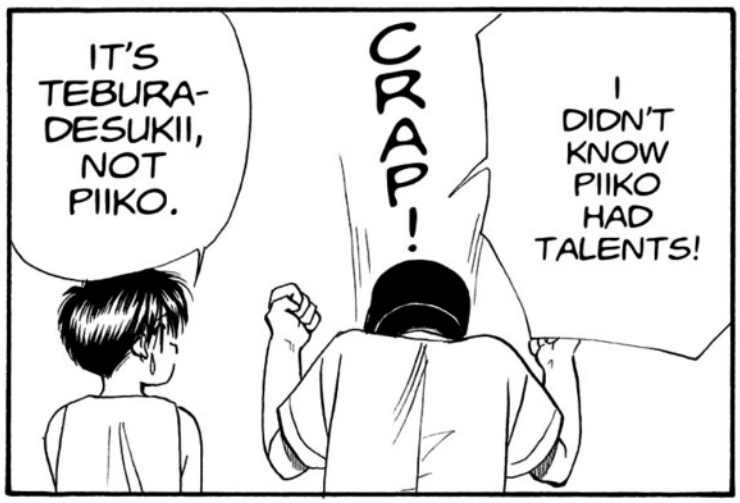
WE HAVE TO DO SOME-THING ABOUT THIS.
THE BIRD'S OWNER IS COMING BACK IN THREE DAYS.

THE NEXT DAY...
PET SHOP
WUZZ
WHICH ONE LOOKS THE MOST LIKE HIM?
PEEP
PEEP
ALL RIGHT, LET'S GET IT!
BIRDS
THE SECOND ONE FROM THE LEFT, I THINK.
CHEEP CHEEP
THERE'S NOTHING ELSE WE CAN DO.
IS IT OKAY TO DO THIS?
MEOW
NO, IT'S NOT OKAY.
DOG FOOD
SUPER CAT
SUPER HEALTH CAT


TEBURADESUKII COULD SAY, "LOVE YOU."
WHAT?
OH, NO!


HUH?
THANK YOU FOR COM-ING!
WOOSH
BUT CAN IT TALK?
PEEP
AUTO-MATIC DOOR
AUTO-MATIC DOOR

LOVE YOU!
LOVE YOU!


IT'S TEBURA-DESUKII, NOT PIIKO.
CRAP!
I DIDN'T KNOW PIIKO HAD TALENTS!

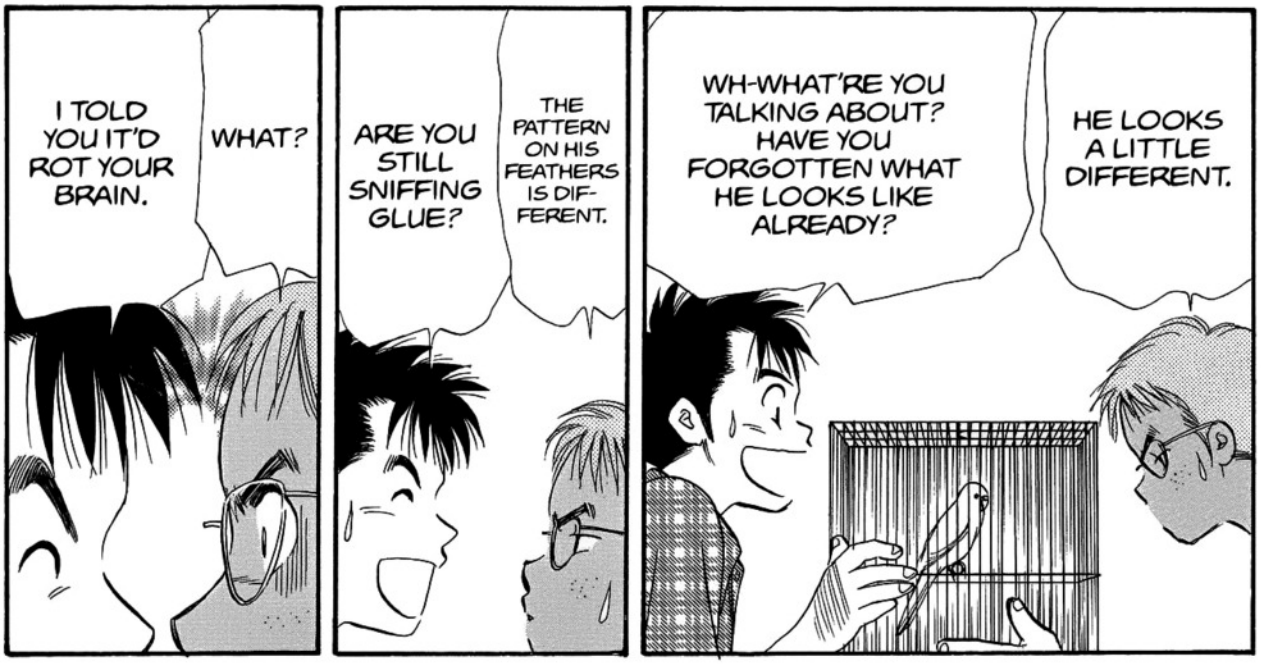
LOVE YOU!
LOVE YOU!
LOVE YOU!
LOVE YOU!
LOVE YOU!
PEEP
LOVE YOU!
SAY IT! PLEASE!!
LOVE YOU!
S-SEI-ICHI!
KLATTA KLATTA
HURRY UP AND SAY IT!
PEEP
SEIICHI, WE COULD TELL HIM THE BIRD FLEW INTO THE WALL AND FORGOT HOW TO TALK.
SEIICHI'S ONLY BEEN AT IT FOR TWO MINUTES.
I CAN'T BELIEVE MAENO WOULD TEACH HIS BIRD TO SAY SOMETHING SO CORNY.
HMPH! IT'S NO USE.
KLIK
FSS
Baseball
REALLY?
HE'LL KNOW THE DIFFERENCE! ITS VOICE ISN'T EVEN THE SAME!
THAT WON'T WORK!
GOOD IDEA!
YEAH!
FWUP

...
MINORU ...
I WONDER WHERE THE REAL PIIKO WENT.
HUH? THE REAL ONE?
WIP
STOP LYING OR YOU'RE GONNA BE IN BIG TROUBLE!!
I DON'T KNOW.
OKAY, MINORU?
TELL ME THE TRUTH.
WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO TEBURADESUKII?
...
PLUP
MAYBE HE REALLY DOESN'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED.

THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M UPSET ABOUT.
YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY. WHEN MAENO LEARNS THE TRUTH...
I WANT YOU TO KNOW SOME-THING...
YOU'RE A GOOD KID, TAKUYA.
FWOO
...HE'LL BLAME ME BECAUSE I WAS RESPON-SIBLE FOR THE BIRD.
NO! I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT MYSELF!
YOU WANT MINORU TO COME CLEAN SO YOU WON'T GET IN TROUBLE, RIGHT?
JUST KEEP LYING FOREVER!!
I'VE HAD IT. I DON'T CARE ABOUT MINORU ANYMORE!
WHAT'S WITH HIM?
CHILDREN DON'T LIE.
UBB...

...YOUR FATHER'S SHIRT HAS A HOLE IN IT.
DID YOU RIP IT?
TAKUYA ...
DIDN'T I SEE YOU WITH THE SCISSORS A WHILE AGO, TAKUYA?
THEN WHO DID IT?
NO, IT WASN'T ME.
WHAT?
A BU...
A BUTTERFWY DID IT.
THAT'S WHAT PEOPLE SAY...
...BUT THEY DO LIE WHEN THEY GET SCARED.
THEN THEY PAINT THEMSELVES INTO A CORNER AND LIE AGAIN.

NNN
NNN
...
CHEEP
CHEEP
I JUST REMEMBERED SOMETHING I WANTED TO FORGET.
WELL...
...THANKS FOR TAKING CARE OF HIM FOR A WHOLE WEEK.
...YOUR KONA COFFEE.
AND HERE'S...
BDMP
HEY...
HUH?
HI, TEBURADESUKII! HOW HAVE YOU BEEN? ♡
NOT REALLY.
OH, THANKS.
WELL, YOU'RE PROBABLY IN A HURRY, HUH, MAENO?


I TOLD YOU IT'D ROT YOUR BRAIN.
WHAT?

ARE YOU STILL SNIFFING GLUE?
THE PATTERN ON HIS FEATHERS IS DIFFERENT.

WH-WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT? HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE ALREADY?
HE LOOKS A LITTLE DIFFERENT.

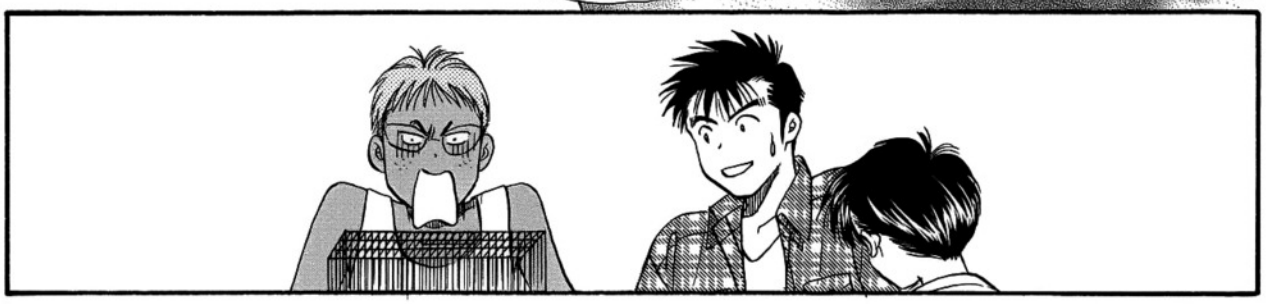
I'LL KILL YOU!
ARE YOU ON DRUGS OR SOMETHING?
WHAP

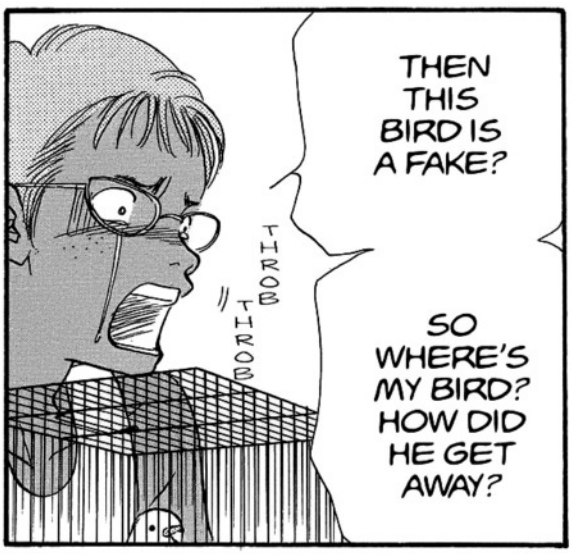
IS THIS REALLY TEBURADESUKII?

REALLY?
THIS BIRD EVEN SOUNDS DIFFERENT!
I'VE NEVER DONE THAT!
SHIVER

THAT'S ENOUGH.
SEIICHI...

...
I'M SORRY.
I LET TEBURADESUKII GET AWAY.




THEN THIS BIRD IS A FAKE?
SO WHERE'S MY BIRD? HOW DID HE GET AWAY?
THROB THROB

I CAN SPEAK FOR MYSELF!!
...MAENO'S NOT THE TYPE OF GUY WHO'D GET MAD ABOUT SOMETHING AS TRIVIAL AS THIS! DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT!
TAKUYA...

...AN' HE FWY AWAY.
DA WINDOW WAS OPEN...

HOW?

KRK

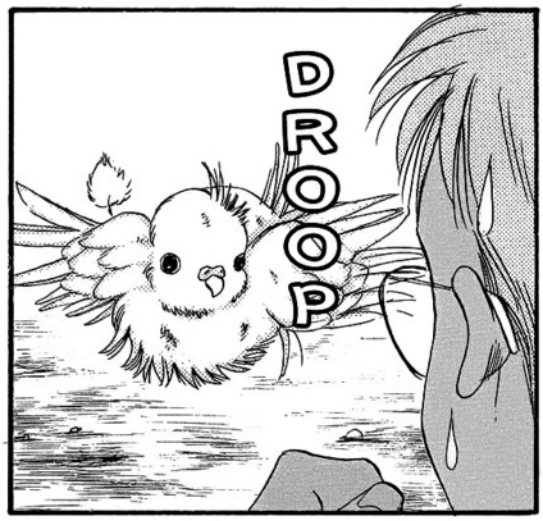
HOW DID HE GET AWAY?

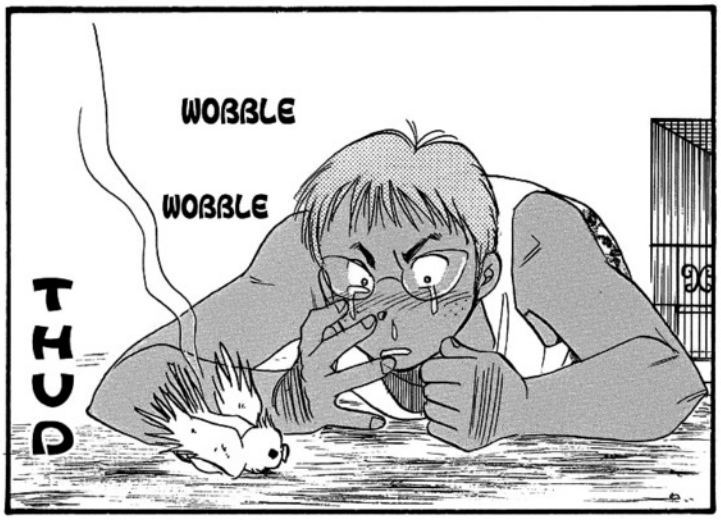
"FWANSES GOBBOED HIM UP"? WHAT'S HE TALKING ABOUT?

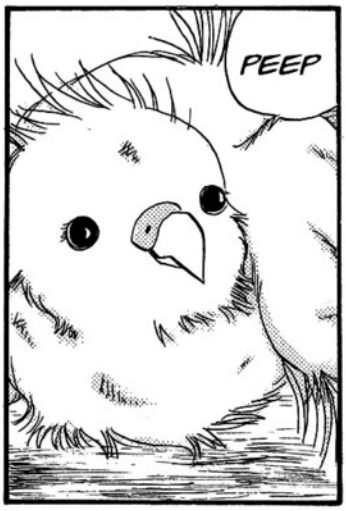
I SOWEE.
BAD BOY.
I WAS BAD...
BOOM
HE SAYS A DOG NAMED FRANCES ATE YOUR BIRD.

MINORU?
HE FWEW OUTSIDE, AN'...
...FWANSES GOBBOED HIM UP.

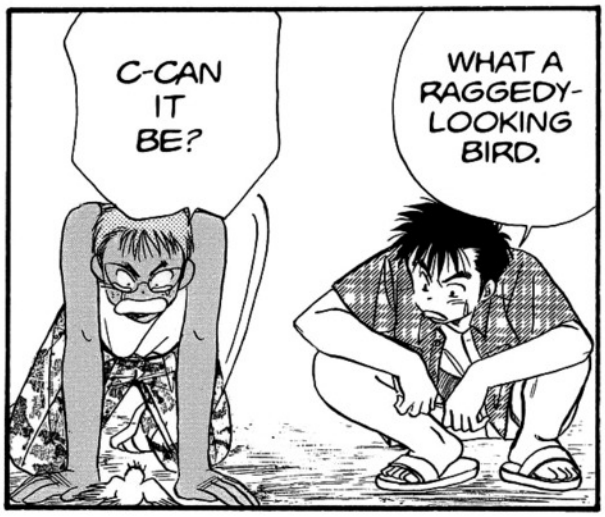
OHHH! TEBU-RADESUKII!
A-ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
YOU'RE A GOOD BOY, MINORU! WAY TO 'FESS UP!
HUH?
FWUP
FWUP
BOO-HOO
SOB SOB


DROOP

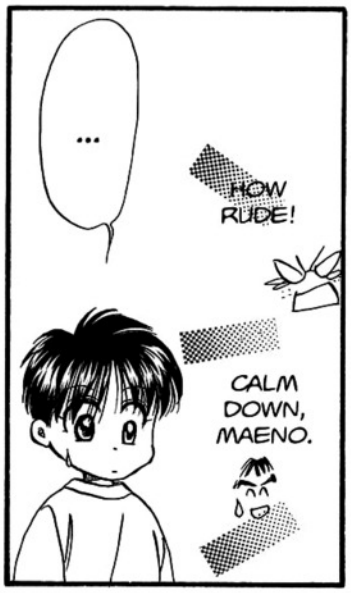

WOBBLE
WOBBLE
THUD

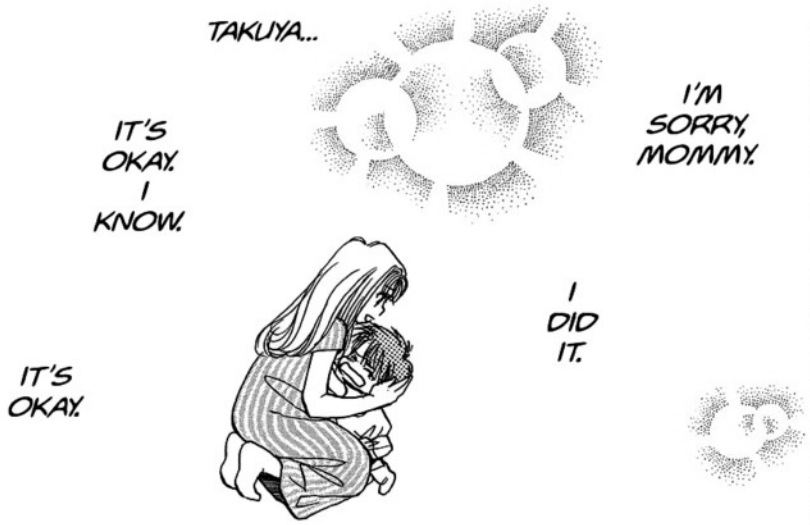

PEEP

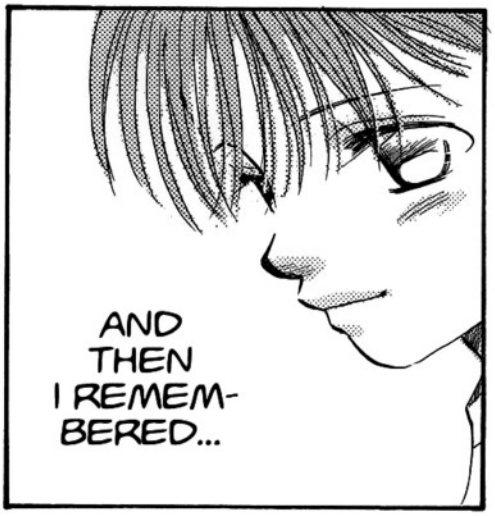
TEBU-RADE-SUKII?


C-CAN IT BE?
WHAT A RAGGEDY-LOOKING BIRD.

UMM... TAKE THIS ONE TOO.
YOU POOR THING! YOU'VE HAD A HARD TIME, HAVEN'T YOU? BUT YOU'RE SAFE NOW.
TOUCHED
SWF
PEEP
SWF
LOVE YOU!
LOVE YOU!
LOVE YOU!
LOOK, DAD! IT'S THE PARA-KEET!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING AT SEIICHI'S?
TAKUYA, MINORU ...
WHAT?
BA-DOOM
DOES IT HAVE A DISEASE OR SOME-THING?
IT'S FILTHY!
DROOP
PARA-KEET?





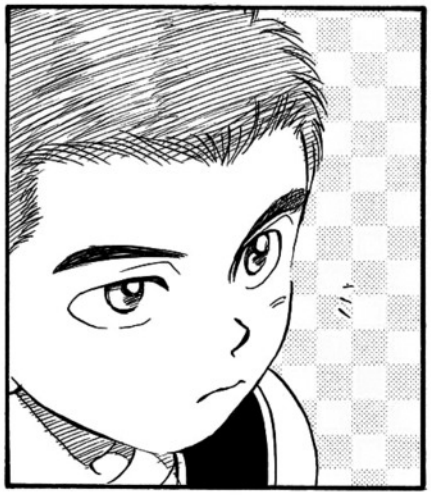


Chapter 88 / The End

Chapter 89

302
FUJII
ISAO
EMIKO
AKEMI
TOMO
ASAKO
AKIHIRO
ICHIKA
MASAKI
WHUP
WAIT!
TAKE OUT THE TRASH ON YOUR WAY.
AKIHIRO...
It's getting stinky.
I MISSED THE LAST PICKUP.
WHAT? TWO BAGS?
TOKYO
Free Time
SHUFF
SHUFF
!
DO MY HANDS STINK?
THERE.
THUD
TOKYO

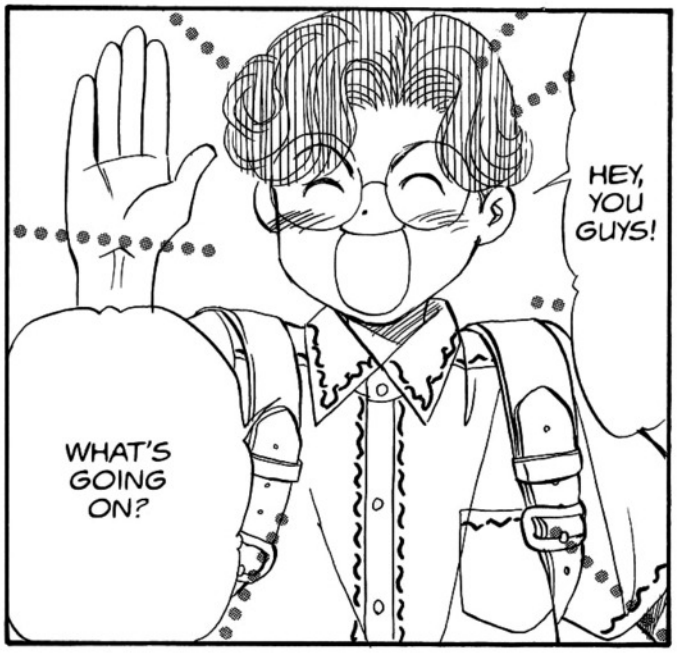
I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU TAKE OUT THE TRASH BEFORE.
HI.
HEY, MI-YAMAE.
REALLY?
THUD



OH, WELL, WHO CARES? IT'S JUST TRASH.

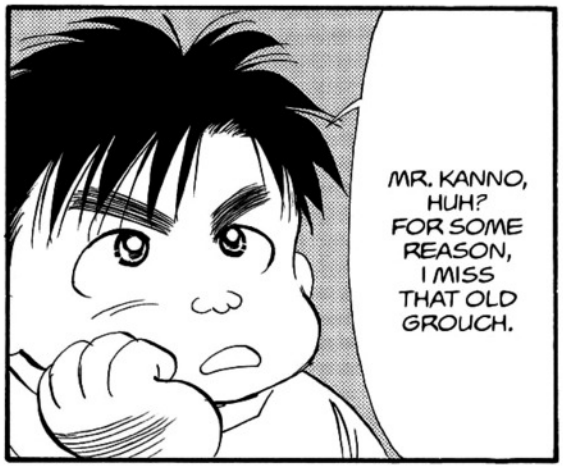
HIS MOM ALWAYS TAKES OUT THE TRASH.
...

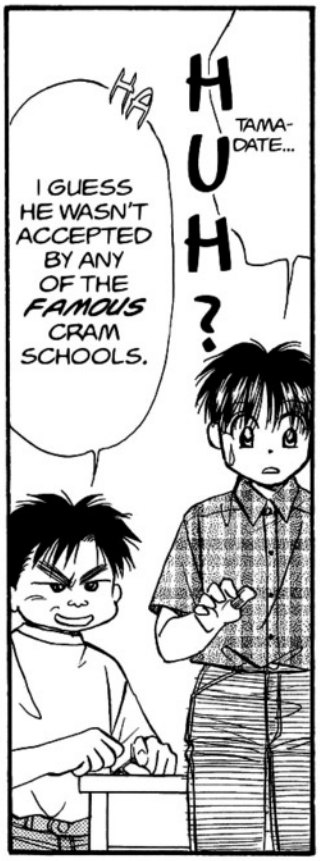
TMP
TMP

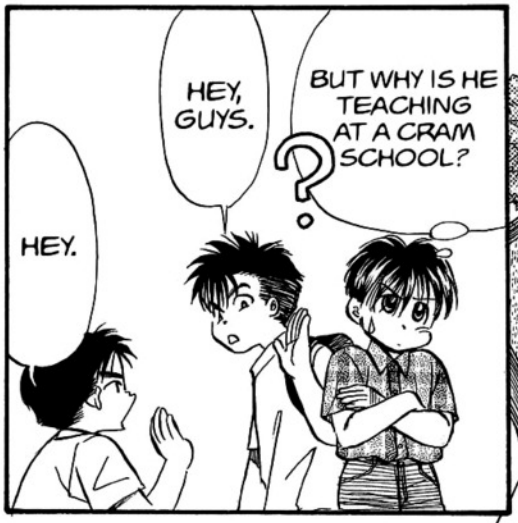

HEY, YOU GUYS!
WHAT'S GOING ON?

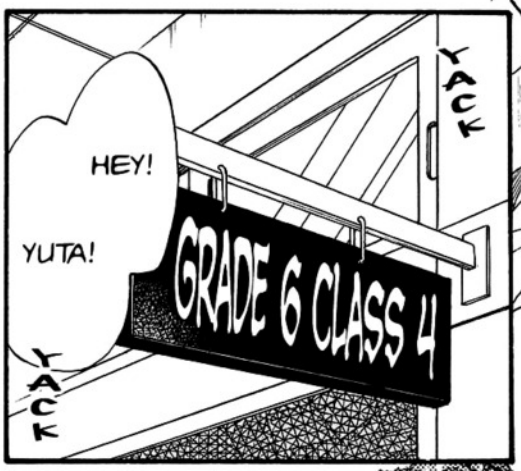
YACK
YACK
KONAN

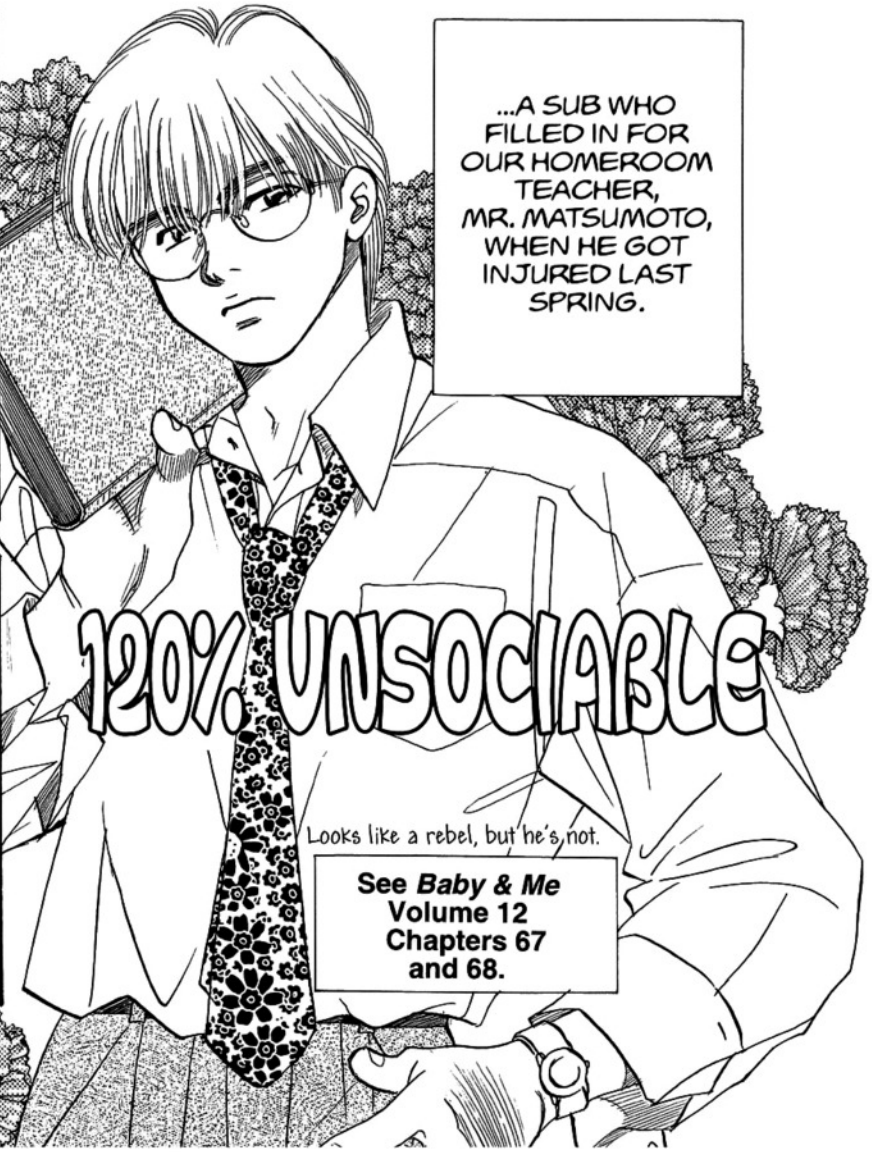
...AND GUESS WHO IT IS!
WHO?
THERE'S A NEW PART-TIME TEACHER OVER AT THE PRIVATE CRAM SCHOOL...
YOU WON'T BELIEVE IT!
WHAT'RE YOU SO EXCITED ABOUT?
HEY, TAMADATE.
I'VE GOT BIG NEWS!
FWIP
SO? YOU CALL THAT NEWS?
HUH?
WELL? ISN'T THAT INCRED-IBLE?
IT'S MR. KANNO!
WHICH ONE?
HUH? HUH?
ARGH...
TAMADATE, WHICH CRAM SCHOOL DO YOU GO TO?
WHO CARES? WE'LL NEVER GET TO SEE HIM ANYWAY.
IT'S NOT LIKE WE ATTEND HIS CLASS.
DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S INTER-ESTING?
very surprised











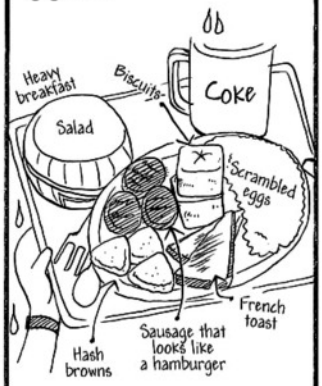
See *Baby & Me* Volume 12 Chapters 67 and 68.

NO THANKS. I GOTTA GO GROCERY SHOPPING.
HMM...
THERE'S LOTS OF DRAGON-FLIES UP THERE.
WANNA GO INTO THE HILLS WITH US TODAY?
WHAT?
Free
OKAY.
NEVER MIND, YUTA! SEE YOU!
ELBOW
WHAM
OOF!
AH!
GROCERY SHOPPING? YOU?
P.E....
HMPH
Free

Author's Note Part 4

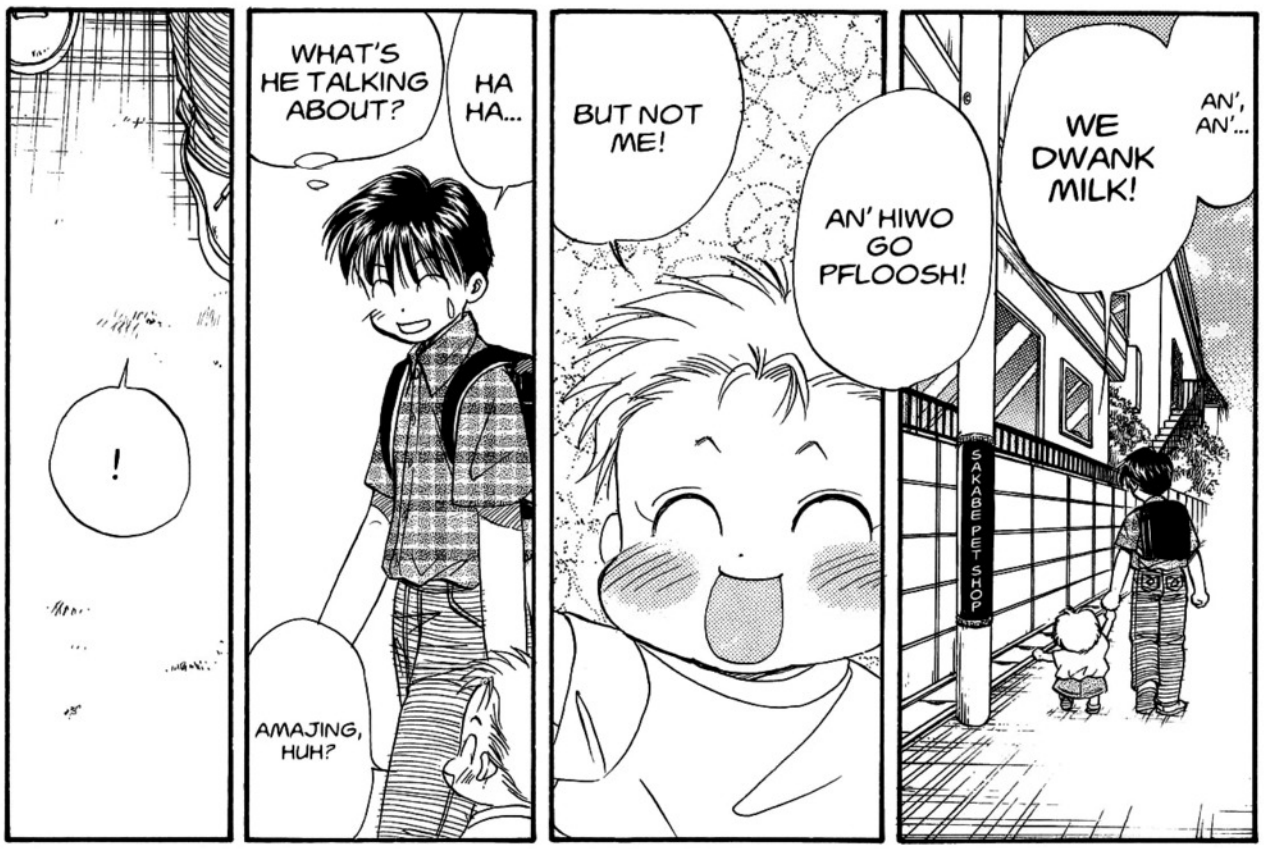
They pronounce things very differently in Japan and the U.S.

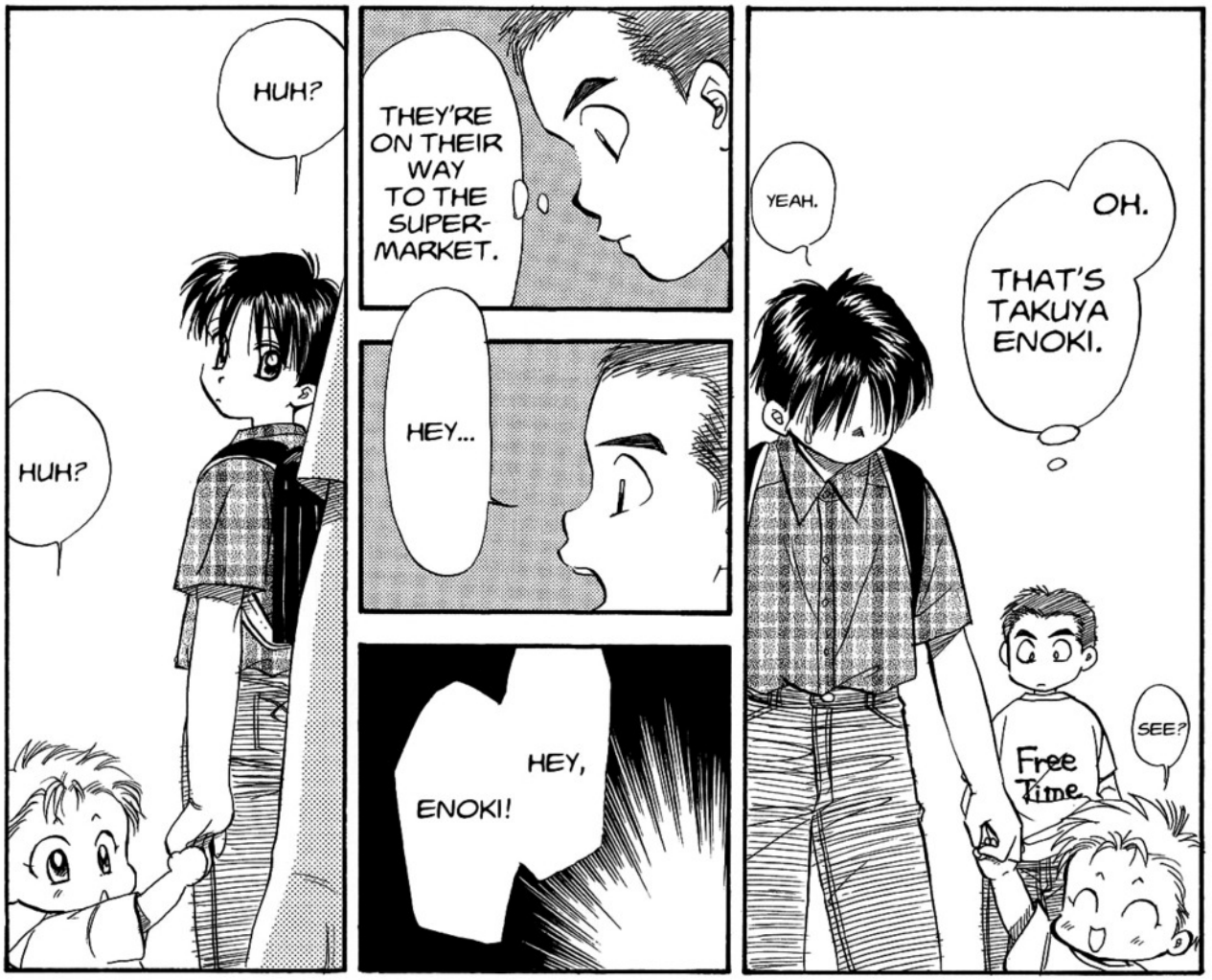
I tried to order a croissant and failed. They call it something like "Kurossan," not "Kurowassan." (My pronunciation was close, so why couldn't they understand me?)
On the first day, I made a mistake. I kept nodding yes to all of the waiter's suggestions, so my first American meal was gigantic!



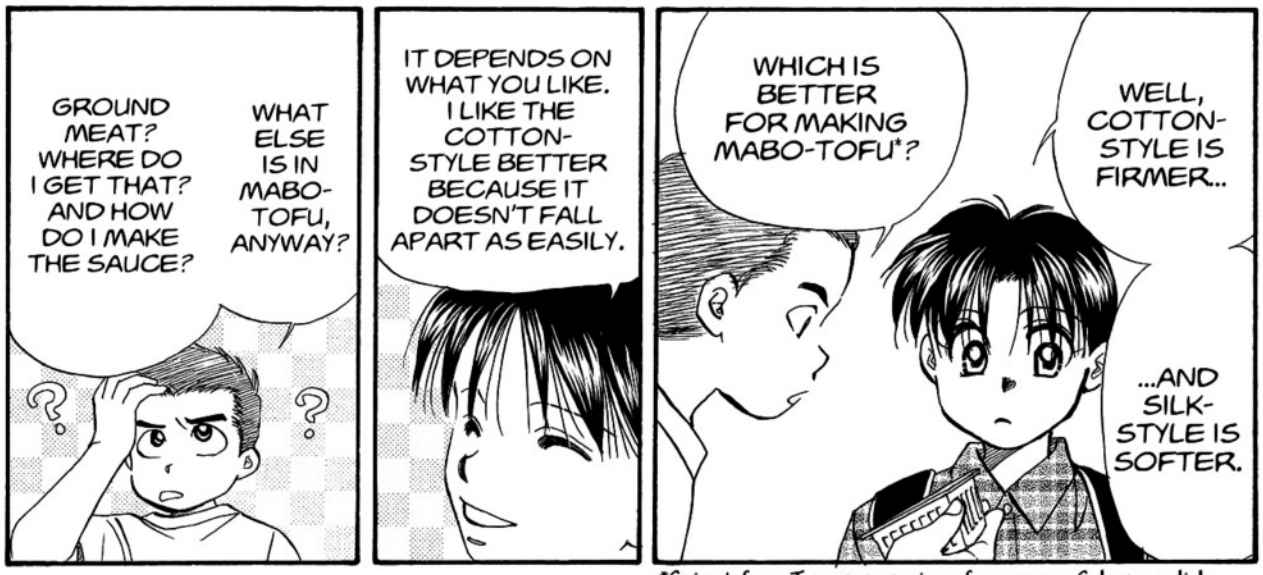
There was no way I could eat it all. Another day, based on the lesson I'd learned, I said, "No, thank you," to refuse the food items I didn't want. The waiter looked puzzled.

Continued in Part 5


!
WHAT'S HE TALKING ABOUT?
HA HA...
AMAJING, HUH?
BUT NOT ME!
AN' HIWO GO PFLOOSH!
WE DWANK MILK!
AN', AN'...
SAKABE PET SHOP

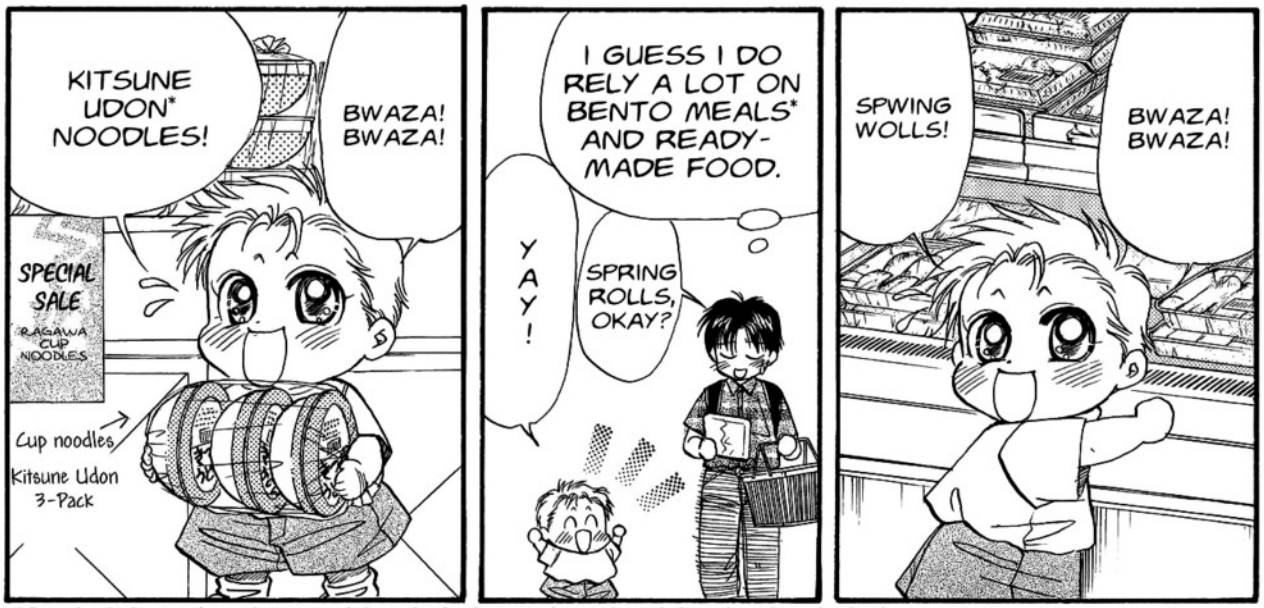

HUH?
HUH?
THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY TO THE SUPER-MARKET.
HEY...
HEY, ENOKI!
YEAH.
OH. THAT'S TAKUYA ENOKI.
SEE?
Free Time

HUH?
OH.
N-NICE TO MEET YOU, TOO.
I'M YUTA MIYAMAE FROM CLASS 4.
HI.
NICE TO MEET YOU.
Free Time
SUMIKO SUPERMARKET
FLOWER SHOP FLOWER DREAMS
FLOWER SHOP FLOWER DREAMS
I FIGURED YOU WERE ON YOUR WAY TO THE SUPER-MARKET...
WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COTTON-STYLE TOFU AND SILK-STYLE?
YEAH?
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER REALLY GONE SHOPPING BY MYSELF.
REALLY?
HEY...
DO YOU ALWAYS SHOP HERE, YUTA?
I WAS ON MY WAY THERE TOO.
WE HAVE LOTS OF FRESH SEA-FOOD TODAY.



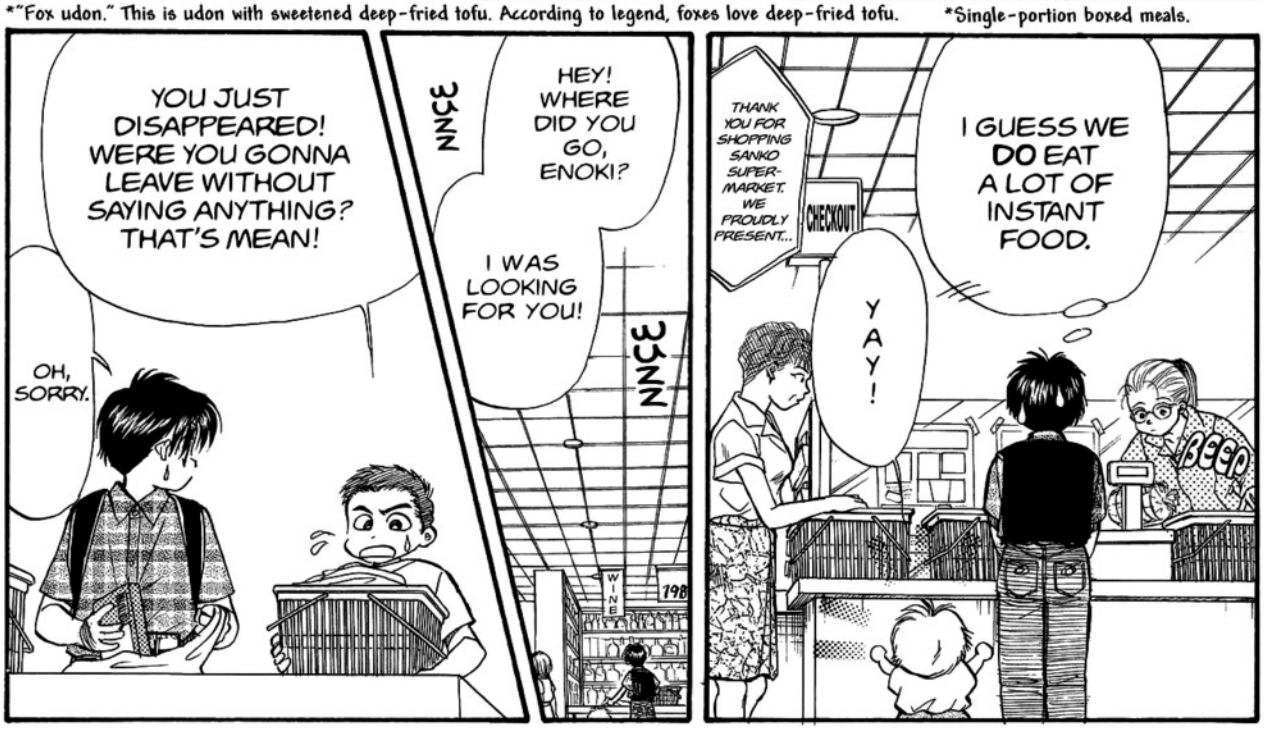
*Spicy tofu, a Japanese version of a common Schezuan dish.

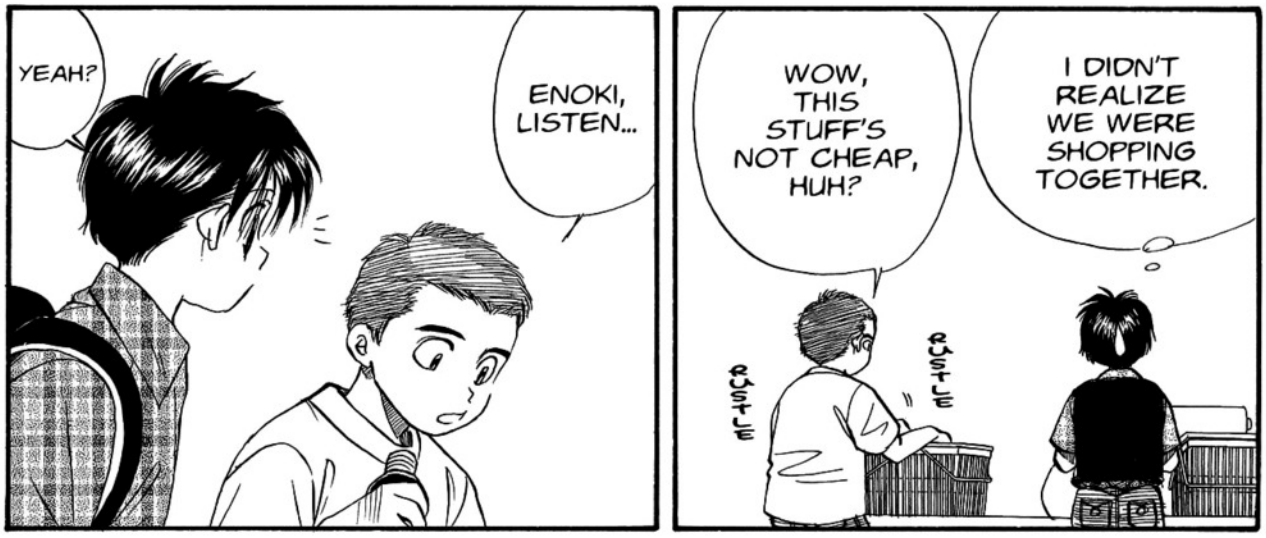
HUH?
BWAZA!!
BWAZA...
COOKING IS BORING.
HUH?
TOMP
TOMP
UMM... I WANT MABO-FU, TOO.
BUT WIW IT BURN MY MOUF?
WE DON'T LIVE ON INSTANT FOOD.
TOFU
SWEET TYPE
COOK
ANYWAY...
OH WELL. HE PROBABLY DIDN'T MEAN TO BE RUDE.
FOOD
READY TO EAT & INSTANT
WHAT DID MIYAMAE MEAN BY THAT?
I WON'T MAKE IT TOO SPICY.
DON'T WORRY.
YAY! ♡
I'M GOOD AT MAKING MISO SOUP, AND DAD'S A GOOD COOK TOO!
CURRY AND RICE, STEW... WE MAKE LOTS OF STUFF WITH PRE-MADE SAUCES.
MUMBLE
HUH?
SO WHAT IF IT COMES OUT OF A POUCH? IT'S JUST THE SAUCE.
It's still real home cooking!
98 YEN
MINORU
SUGAR



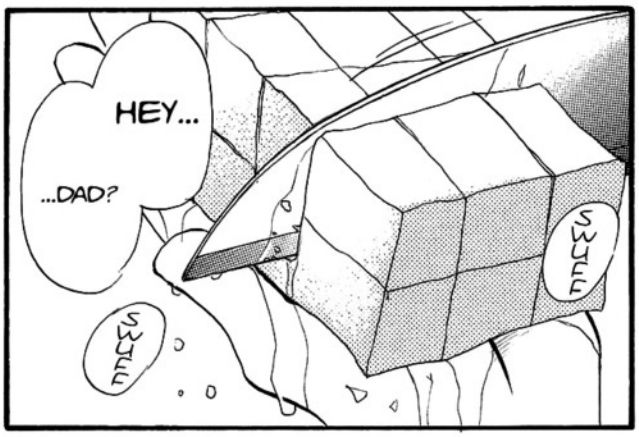
*"Fox udon." This is udon with sweetened deep-fried tofu. According to legend, foxes love deep-fried tofu.

*Single-portion boxed meals.

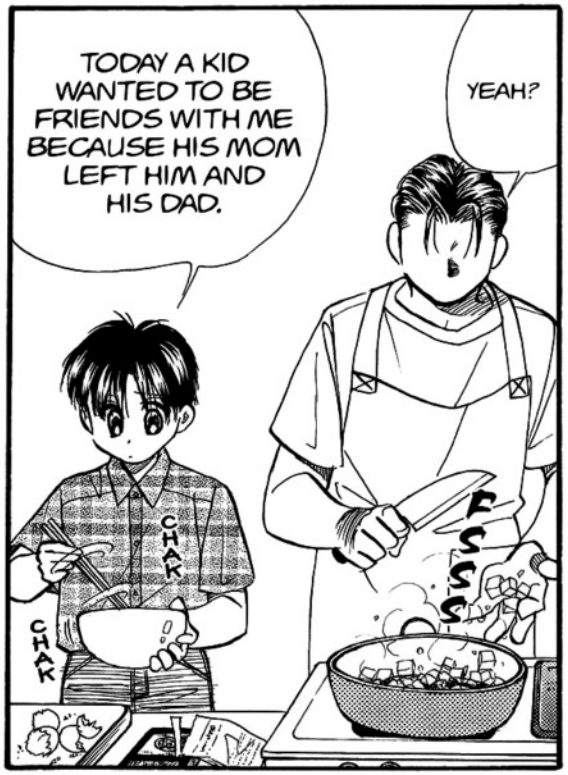




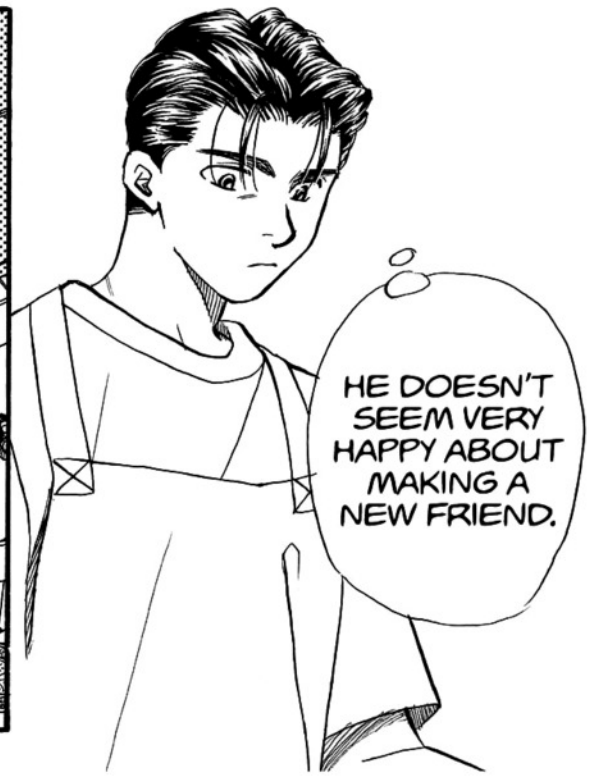
I THINK WE HAVE A LOT IN COMMON.
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO SAY?
NOT AT ALL!
N-NO!
DO YOU MIND?
WIP
WIP
Free
I'D LIKE...
...TO BE FRIENDS WITH YOU.
MY MOM...
...LEFT ME AND MY DAD A FEW DAYS AGO.
HUH?
IN COMMON?
TO ME, FRIENDS ARE PEOPLE...
...YOU LIKE TO HAVE FUN WITH.
THAT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE A VERY GOOD REASON TO BE FRIENDS.
WE DO?
YOU SEE?
WE HAVE SOME-THING IN COMMON.
...
WHAT?


HEY...
...DAD?
SNUFF
SNUFF

ARE THE EGGS READY?
REALLY?
HERE.
For the soup

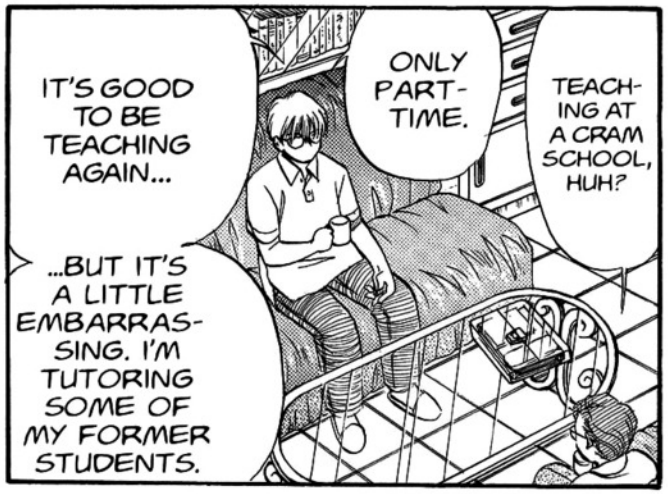

TODAY A KID WANTED TO BE FRIENDS WITH ME BECAUSE HIS MOM LEFT HIM AND HIS DAD.
YEAH?
CHAK
CHAK
FSSSS

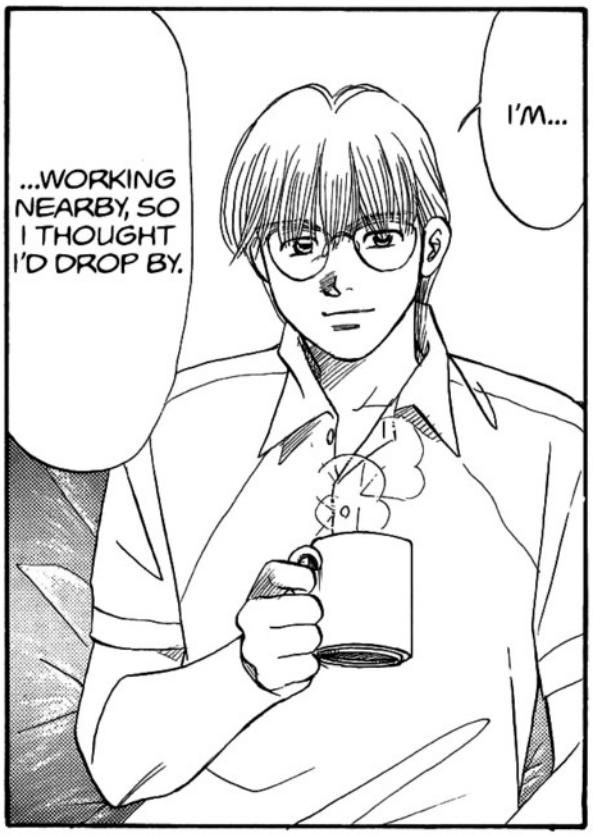
I WANTED TO TALK IT OVER WITH MY DAD...
...BUT I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN WHAT I WAS FEELING.

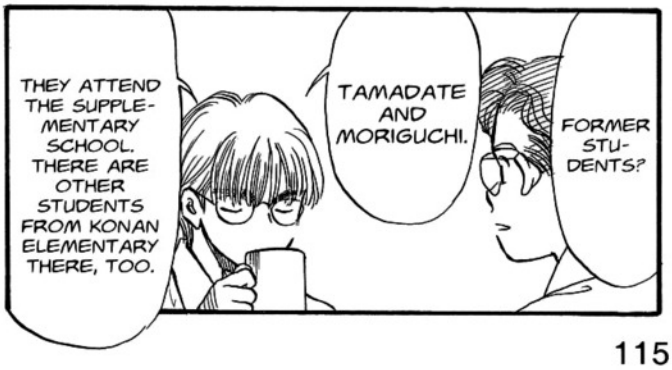

HE DOESN'T SEEM VERY HAPPY ABOUT MAKING A NEW FRIEND.

STAFF ROOM
WELL...
...THIS IS A SURPRISE.
YACK
YACK
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

YEAH.
SLURP

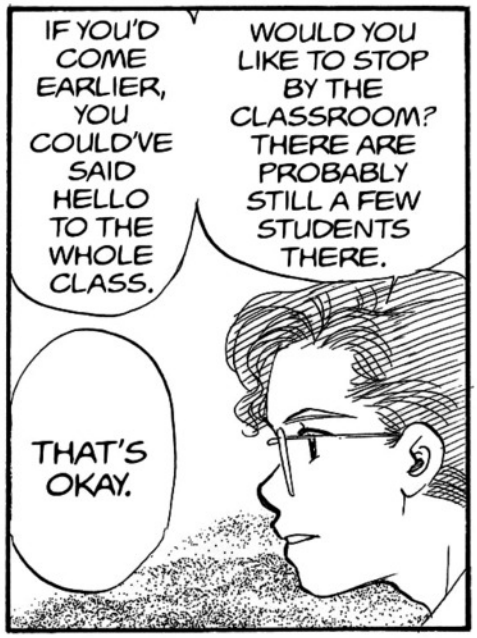

IT'S GOOD TO BE TEACHING AGAIN...
...BUT IT'S A LITTLE EMBARRASSING. I'M TUTORING SOME OF MY FORMER STUDENTS.
ONLY PART-TIME.
TEACHING AT A CRAM SCHOOL, HUH?

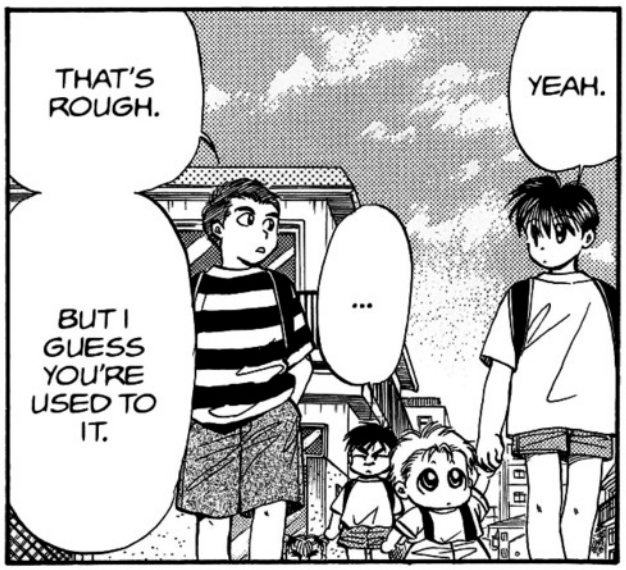

I'M...
...WORKING NEARBY, SO I THOUGHT I'D DROP BY.

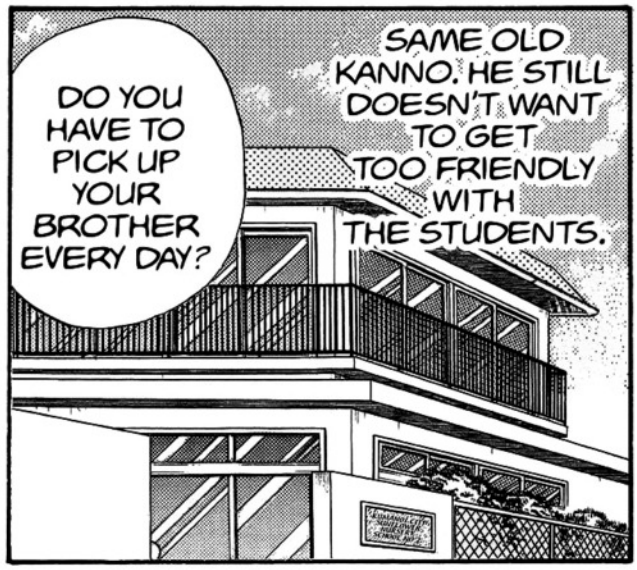

THEY ATTEND THE SUPPLEMENTARY SCHOOL. THERE ARE OTHER STUDENTS FROM KONAN ELEMENTARY THERE, TOO.
TAMADATE AND MORIGUCHI.
FORMER STUDENTS?

GREAT.
I GET IT.

I JUST WANTED TO DROP BY AND SEE YOU BEFORE WORK.
HUH?


IF YOU'D COME EARLIER, YOU COULD'VE SAID HELLO TO THE WHOLE CLASS.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO STOP BY THE CLASSROOM? THERE ARE PROBABLY STILL A FEW STUDENTS THERE.
THAT'S OKAY.


THAT'S ROUGH.
YEAH.
BUT I GUESS YOU'RE USED TO IT.
...

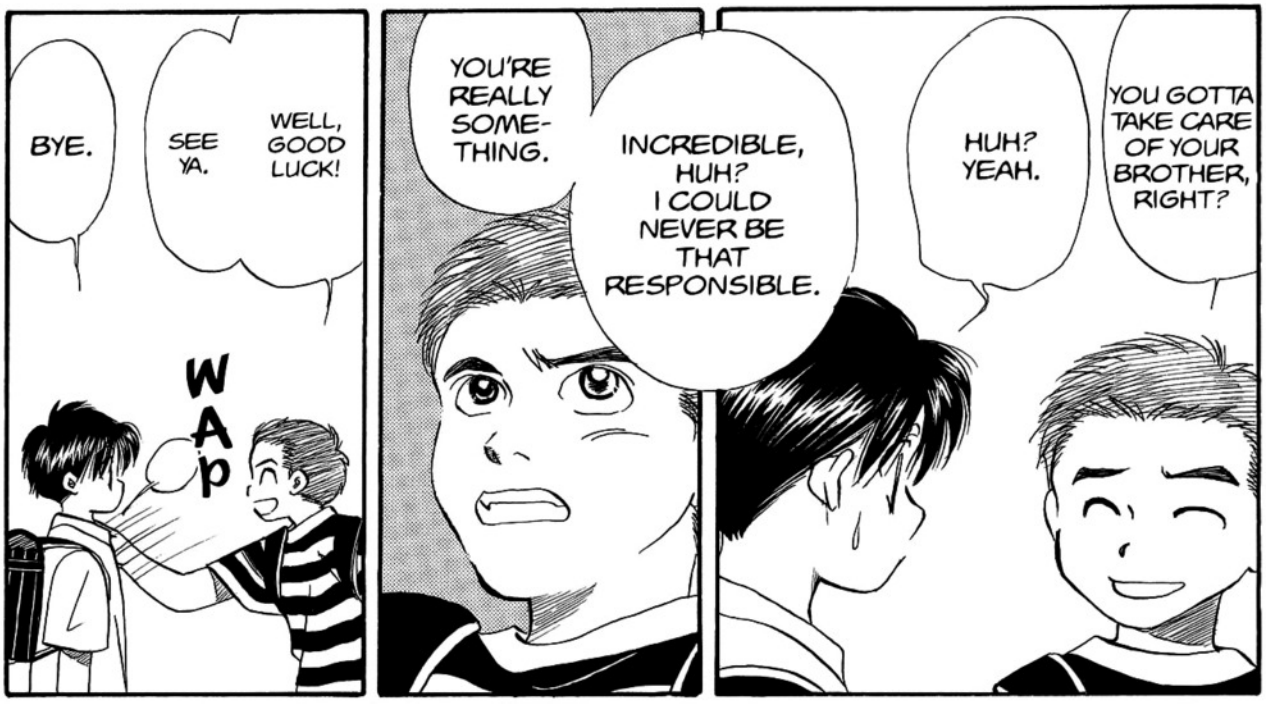

DO YOU HAVE TO PICK UP YOUR BROTHER EVERY DAY?
SAME OLD KANNO. HE STILL DOESN'T WANT TO GET TOO FRIENDLY WITH THE STUDENTS.

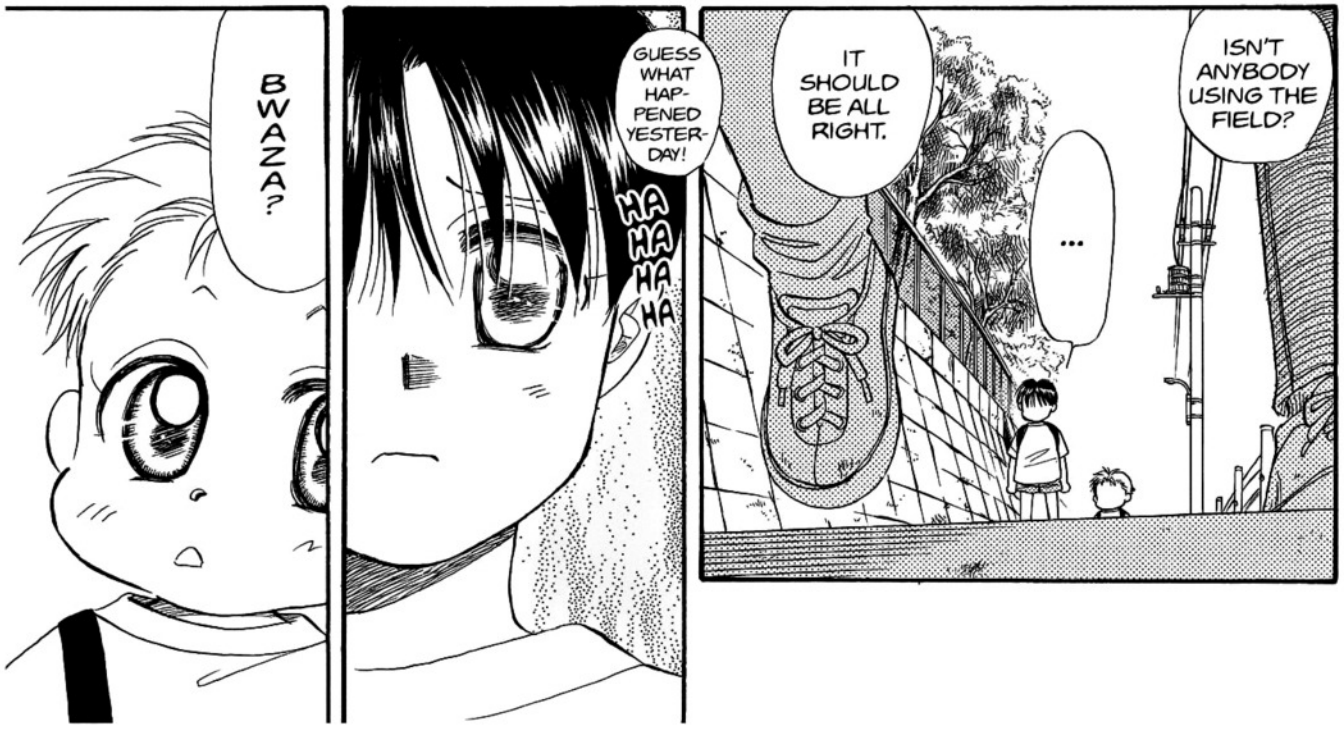
SOCCER? SURE!
WE'RE GONNA PLAY SOCCER OVER AT THE SCHOOL. WANNA COME?
AH ...

HEY! YUTA!

HE'S TRYING TO TAKE TAKUYA AWAY FROM ME.
Abandoned
MINOWU ...

HE CAN'T.
OH, SORRY, BUT I...
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU AND YUTA WERE FRIENDS. YOU WANNA PLAY SOCCER?
THAT'S RIGHT.
YOU'RE ENOKI FROM CLASS 2.
HEY!


BYE.
SEE YA.
WELL, GOOD LUCK!
WAp
YOU'RE REALLY SOME-THING.
INCREDIBLE, HUH? I COULD NEVER BE THAT RESPONSIBLE.
HUH? YEAH.
YOU GOTTA TAKE CARE OF YOUR BROTHER, RIGHT?


BWAZA?
GUESS WHAT HAP-PENED YESTER-DAY!
HA HA HA HA
IT SHOULD BE ALL RIGHT.
...
ISN'T ANYBODY USING THE FIELD?

PEACH GUM
THEN WE'LL BRING A BUCKET AND A SCOOP WITH US.
AN' MY EDEPHANT WATEWING CAN!
I WANNA PWAY IN DA SAN' BOX!
...
HUH?
OH, SORRY. IT'S NOTHING.
LET'S DROP OUR STUFF OFF AT HOME AND GO TO THE PARK, OKAY?
IT'S FOR YOU.
...
GUM!
TAK
OUCH!
WHAT'S THAT?

HEY, YUTA...
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN FRIENDS WITH ENOKI?
HUH?
IT'S WEIRD. YOU TWO AREN'T ANYTHING ALIKE.
WELL, NEITHER OF US HAS A MOTHER AT HOME.
BUT YOUR MOM ISN'T DEAD.
AND YOU DON'T HAVE A LITTLE BROTHER TO TAKE CARE OF.
YEAH.
HE'S A LOT...
HUH?
MR. KANNO?

ON MY WAY BACK, I DECIDED TO TAKE A WALK.
I WENT TO SEE MR. MATSUMOTO...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, MR. KANNO?
CHIRP CHIRP
...WORSE OFF THAN ME.
CHIRP CHIRP
YEAH. WHEN I CAN'T FIND WORK AS A SUBSTITUTE, I HAVE TO TAKE PART-TIME JOBS.
IS IT JUST PART-TIME?
HUH? REALLY?
YOU DID?
I HEARD YOU'RE TEACHING AT THAT CRAM SCHOOL OVER BY THE STATION.
YES?
ENOKI?
IT'S A LOT HARDER FOR OLDER PEOPLE WHO GET LAID OFF.
BUT IT'S FAIRLY EASY FOR ME TO FIND WORK BECAUSE I'M STILL YOUNG.
THAT SOUNDS TOUGH.
Chewing gum

I HOPE THIS DOESN'T SOUND TOO HARSH...
...BUT YOU CAN'T BE FRIENDS WITH SOMEBODY WHO HAS NOTHING TO OFFER YOU.
NOTHING TO OFFER?
DO YOU THINK IT'S WRONG...
...TO EXPECT THINGS FROM YOUR FRIENDS?
I DON'T KNOW. MAYBE.
YOU AND GOTOH ARE GOOD FRIENDS, RIGHT? WHY DO YOU HANG OUT WITH HIM?
WELL, BECAUSE GON'S FUNNY AND I LIKE BEING AROUND HIM.
I DON'T WANT ANYTHING FROM HIM.
THERE ARE THINGS WE WANT FROM OTHERS WITHOUT REALIZING IT.
THERE ARE THINGS WE ALL NEED.
HUMAN BEINGS SOMETIMES SUPPORT EACH OTHER IN WAYS THEY'RE NOT AWARE OF.
THAT'S WHY THEY SOMETIMES QUARREL OVER SMALL THINGS TOO.
MR. KANNO...

DID YOU SEE ME TALKING TO MIYAMAE?
...WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME ALL THIS?

MR. KANNO ...
!

...
BYE-BYE!
SAY HI TO YOUR CLASSMATES FOR ME.
HA HA... YOUR LITTLE BROTHER'S CUTE. BYE-BYE!

SORRY, I HAVE TO RUN.
OH

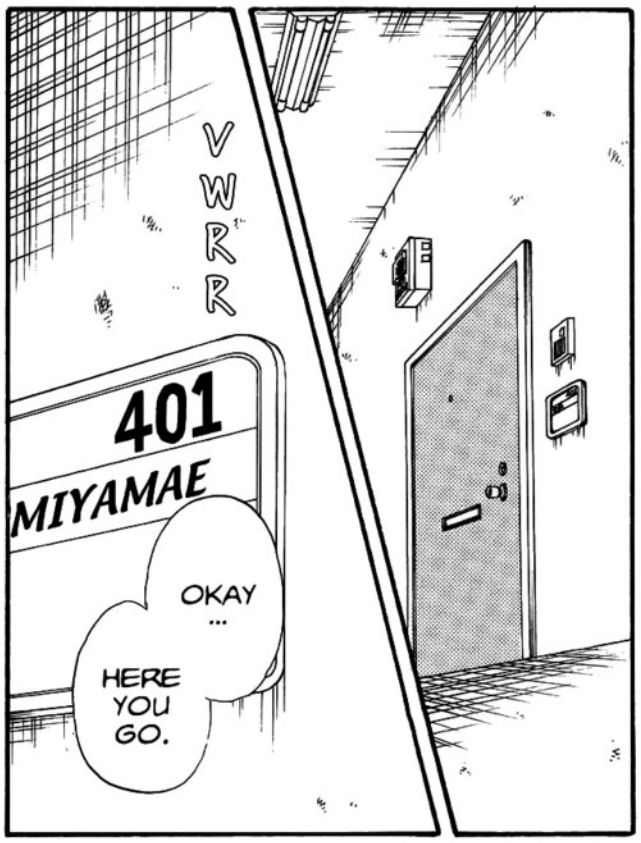
I...
WHAT CAN I SAY?
WHAT DO I WANT TO SAY?

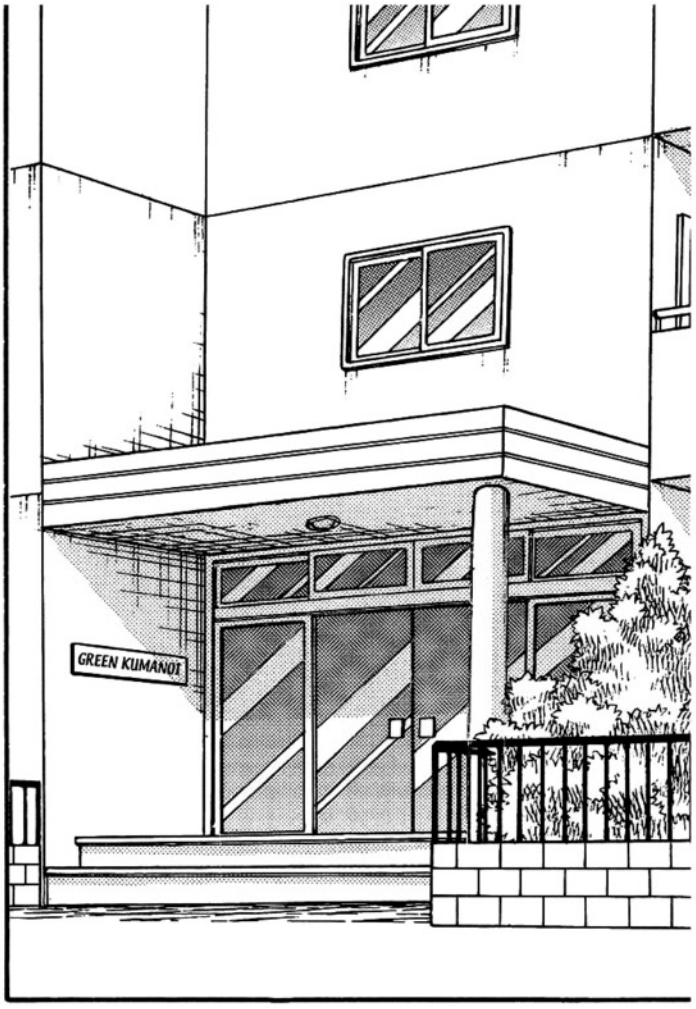
MR. KANNO, I...

ENOKI.
I WORK ...
...AT THE SUPPLEMENTARY SCHOOL ON MONDAYS, WEDNESDAYS AND FRIDAYS. I'LL BE HERE AROUND THIS TIME ON THOSE DAYS.
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
IF I DON'T SAY SOMETHING NOW, HE'LL THINK I'M AN IDIOT.
IF THERE'S SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND, MAYBE I CAN HELP YOU FIGURE IT OUT.
OKAY?
THAT'S ...
...AMAZING. HOW DID MR. KANNO KNOW?
WUZZ
WUZZ
MY DAD CAN DO STUFF LIKE THAT TOO.
CAN GROWN-UPS READ MINDS?

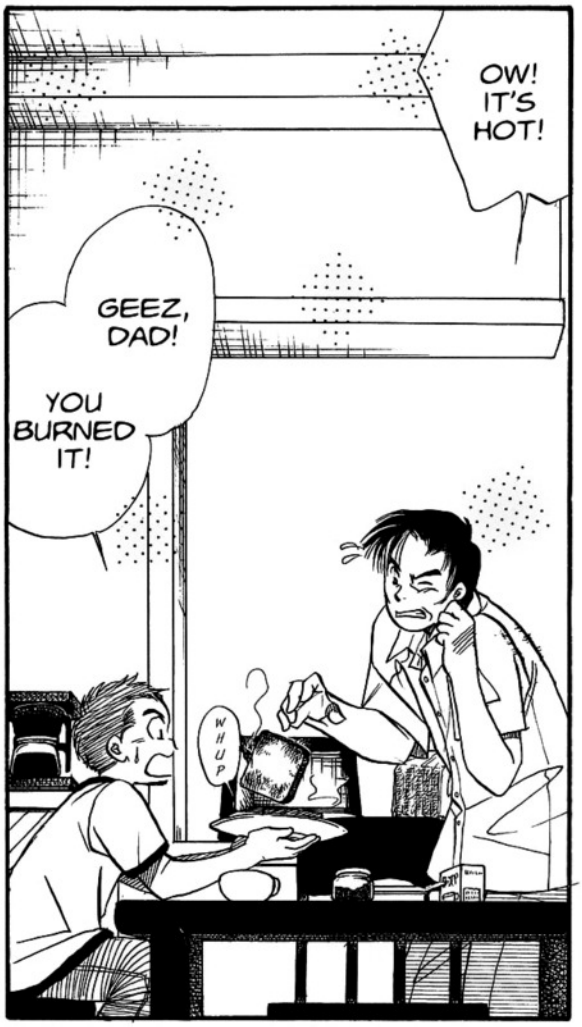
Chapter 89 / The End

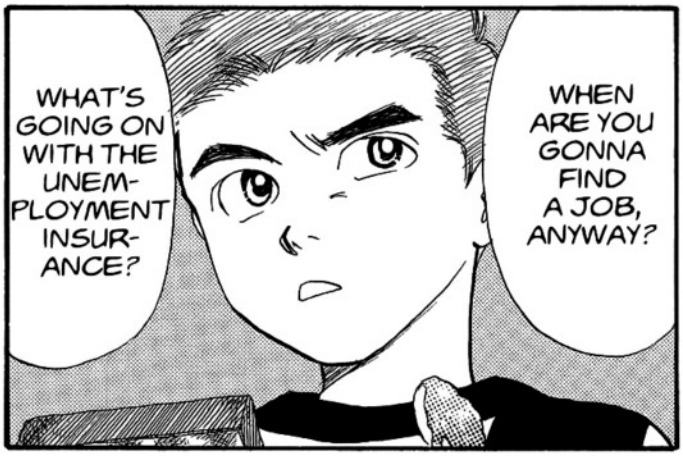
BABY & Me
Chapter 90


VWRR
401
MIYAMAE
OKAY ...
HERE YOU GO.


GREEN KUMANOI

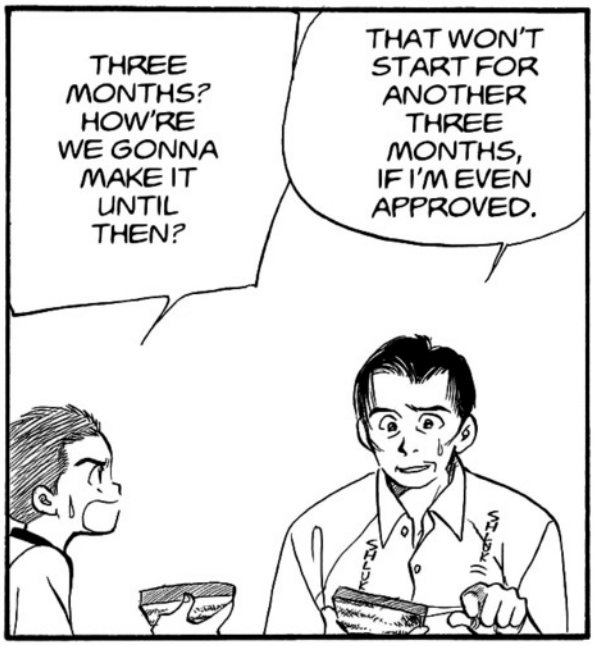
GEEZ...YOU CAN'T EVEN TOAST BREAD RIGHT, HUH?
WELL, JUST PUT SOME JAM ON IT.
THAT MABO-TOFU YOU MADE THE OTHER NIGHT **STUNK**.

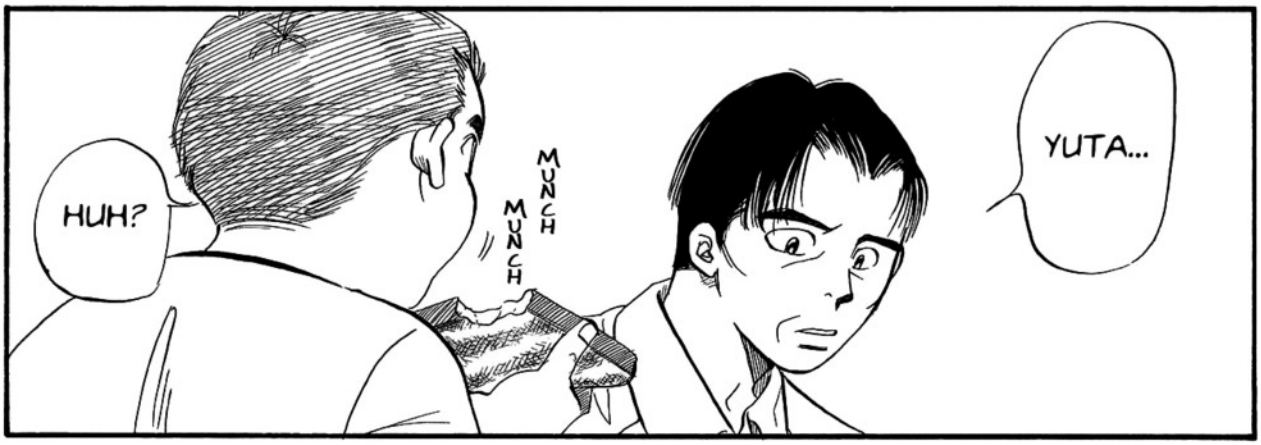

OW! IT'S HOT!
GEEZ, DAD!
YOU BURNED IT!
WHUP


WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THE UNEM-PLOYMENT INSUR-ANCE?
WHEN ARE YOU GONNA FIND A JOB, ANYWAY?

GRR
GEEZ! THE GOVERNMENT TAKES ALL YOUR MONEY WHEN YOU HAVE A JOB, BUT IT DOESN'T WANT TO GIVE ANY BACK WHEN YOU'RE DOWN AND OUT!
GRR
MUNCH

I'LL JUST HAVE TO FIND A JOB.
I PROBABLY WON'T QUALIFY ANYWAY.


THREE MONTHS? HOW'RE WE GONNA MAKE IT UNTIL THEN?
THAT WON'T START FOR ANOTHER THREE MONTHS, IF I'M EVEN APPROVED.


HUH?
MUNCH
MUNCH
YUTA...

FOR WHAT?
WELL...
...FOR EVERY-THING.

I'M SORRY.

TAKUYA ...
...ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE ALL RIGHT?
YOUR FEVER'S DOWN, BUT YOU DIDN'T EAT BREAKFAST.
I'M FINE.
IT WASN'T MUCH OF A FEVER ANYWAY, AND I'LL HAVE A GOOD LUNCH AT SCHOOL.
IF YOU START FEELING SICK AGAIN...
...MAKE SURE YOU LEAVE SCHOOL EARLY. JUST CALL ME AT THE OFFICE AND I'LL PICK UP MINORU.
OKAY.
BUT I'LL BE FINE.
SEE YOU!
SHWUSH
KLAK
...
I WAN' BWAZA TO PICK ME UP, NOT DADDY!
WHAT?
ZANG

MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE I SKIPPED BREAKFAST.
HMM... IT'S NOT TOO BAD.
FOR SOME REASON ...
ZING
...MY STOMACH HURTS. AM I SICK?
ZING
...MIYAMAE WILL COME LOOKING FOR ME AGAIN TODAY.
I WONDER IF...
AH
NO, DON'T THINK ABOUT IT!
WIP
WIP
CHIRP CHIRP
SIGH
ENOKI ...
IF THERE'S SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND, MAYBE I CAN HELP YOU FIGURE IT OUT.
OKAY?
...
I THINK MR. KANNO WAS RIGHT.

THERE'S ...
...SOMETHING I CAN'T FIGURE OUT THAT'S EATING AT ME.
...
WHY CAN'T I FIGURE IT OUT?
BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS.
HEY...
WHY'RE YOU STANDING THERE MAKING FACES?
WHADDAYA THINK? I'M GOING TO SCHOOL.
FUJII? WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
HUH? WAH!
HUH? MINORU?
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK IT'S ABOUT MINORU?
WHAT? IT'S NOT?
I ALWAYS ASSUME IT HAS SOME-THING TO DO WITH MINORU.
NOT THIS TIME.
YEAH?
IS IT MINORU? WHAT DID HE DO NOW?
I HAVE A LOT ON MY MIND.

*A table covered by a futon with a heater under it. People sit at it in winter to keep their legs warm.

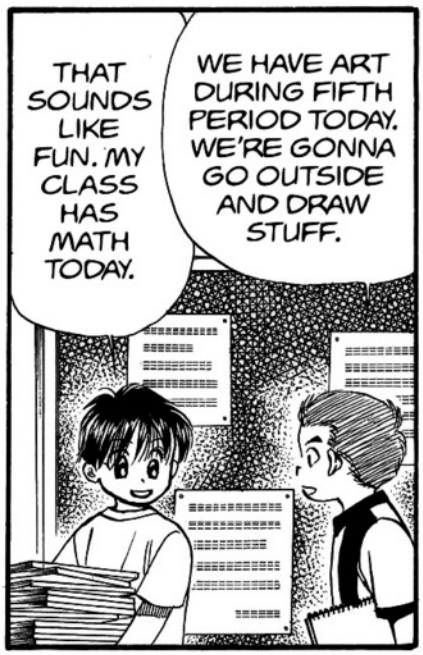
...WHENEVER I WANT TO DO SOMETHING.
BUT IT'S TRUE I ALWAYS HAVE TO CONSIDER MINORU...
HUH?

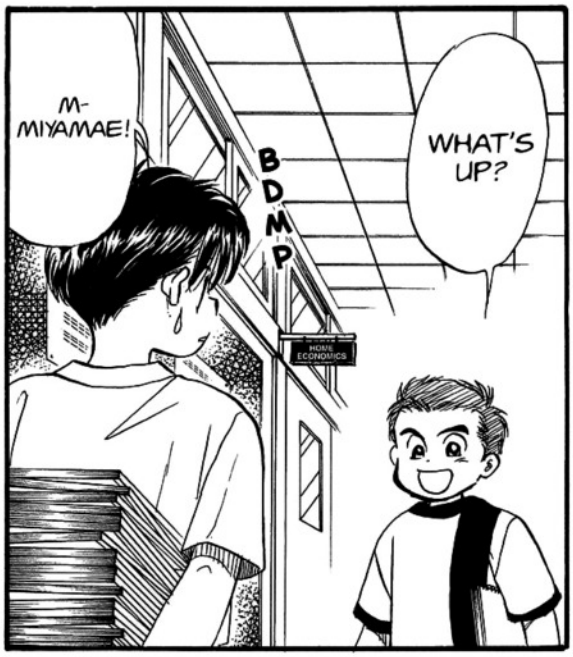
YACK
YACK

Not a care in the world
WHY DOES EVERYBODY THINK MINORU IS MAKING LIFE HARD FOR ME?
THAT'S WEIRD.

ENOKI...

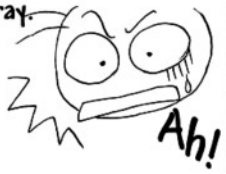
HEY, THIS ISN'T SO BAD...
WHEW


THAT SOUNDS LIKE FUN. MY CLASS HAS MATH TODAY.
WE HAVE ART DURING FIFTH PERIOD TODAY. WE'RE GONNA GO OUTSIDE AND DRAW STUFF.

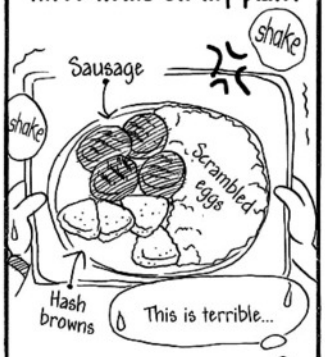

M-MIYAMAE!
BDMP
WHAT'S UP?
HOME ECONOMICS

Author's Note Part 5

I ordered scrambled eggs, sausage and hash browns, just those three things. So I was very surprised when I saw the tray.

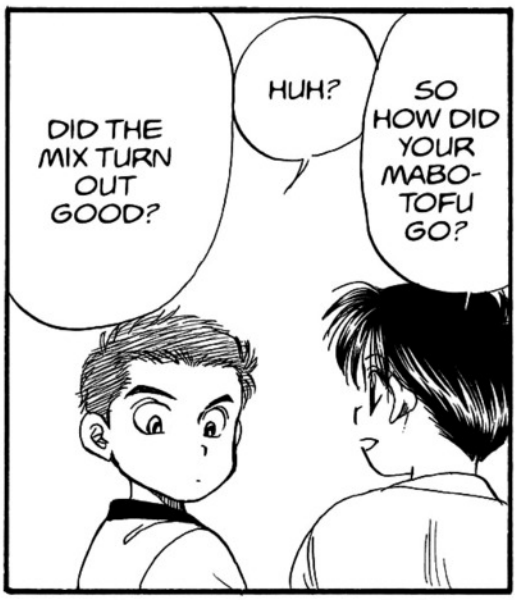


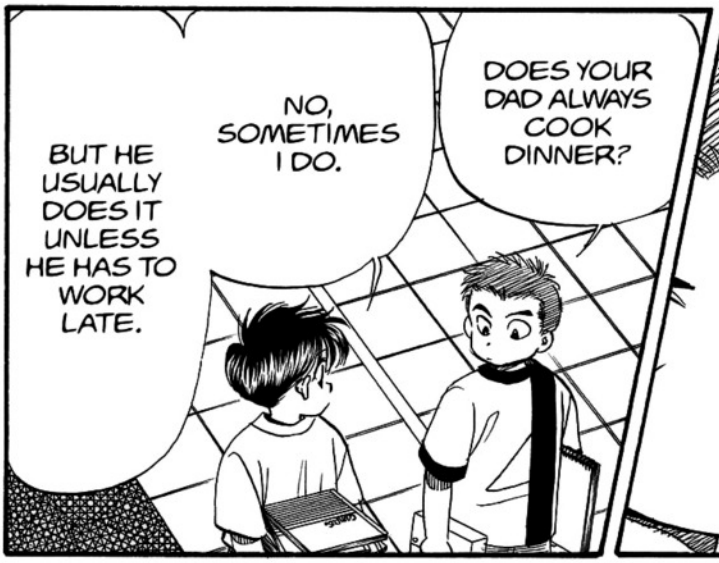
There was a heap of all three items on my plate.

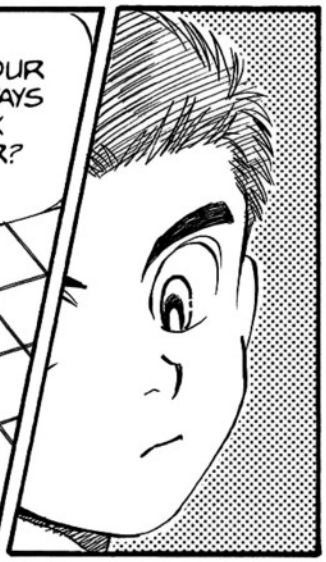


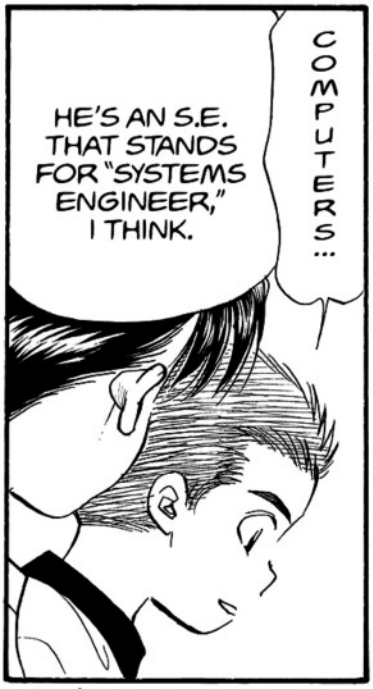
The servings were huge no matter where we ate. I couldn't finish any of my meals. It was all about quantity rather than quality. When I ordered shrimp tempura at Epcot, they gave me five huge pieces of shrimp! I was flabbergasted. And when we visited Planet Hollywood after Universal Studios, I got another shock. There were huge portions of soup, fish, mashed potatoes and string beans, but the most surprising thing was the dessert.

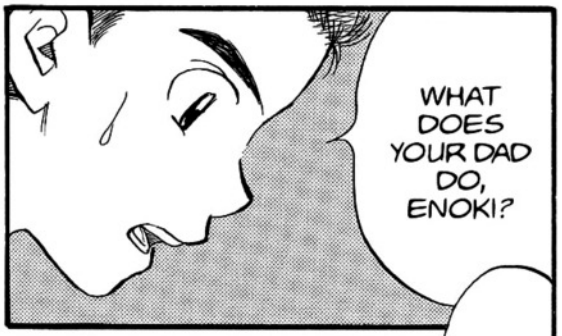
Five scoops of ice cream each! The foreigners finished them all. Just amazing. Continued in Part 6





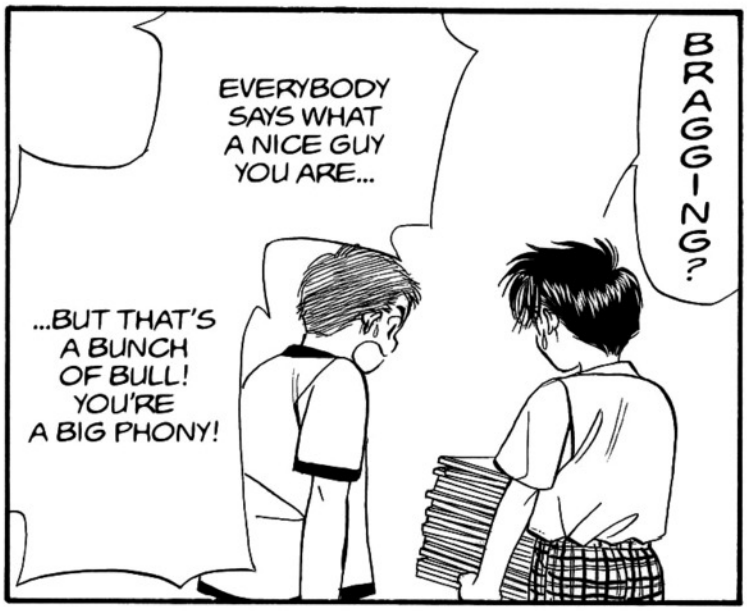




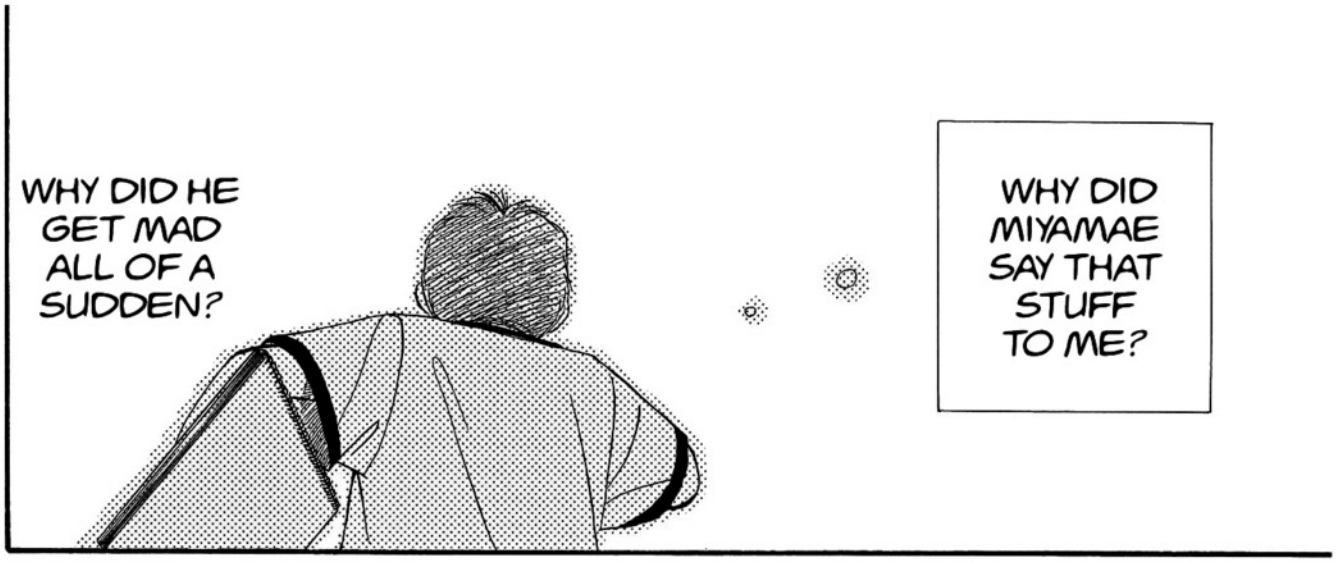


In fact, the ice cream was in a cone, not a glass. I remembered that after I drew this. Sorry.

STOP BRAG-GING!
SHUT UP!
HE WORKS HARD. SOMETIMES HE EVEN HAS TO WORK ON WEEKENDS.
THE OLDER PEOPLE CAN'T KEEP UP, SO MY DAD HAS TO TRAIN ALL THE YOUNGER EMPLOYEES.
AND COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY IS ALWAYS CHANGING, SO HE HAS TO KEEP STUDYING.
WHAT DOES YOUR FATHER DO, MIYAMAE?


BRAGGING?
EVERYBODY SAYS WHAT A NICE GUY YOU ARE...
...BUT THAT'S A BUNCH OF BULL! YOU'RE A BIG PHONY!

YOU MAKE OTHER PEOPLE FEEL BAD!!
DON'T YOU GET IT?
THEN YOU ACT LIKE A BIG SHOT TO HIDE THE FACT THAT YOU'RE PATHETIC!
YOU DO WHAT YOU DO BECAUSE YOU HAVE NO CHOICE!
I DON'T KNOW ...
HOW AM I PATHETIC?
FEEL BAD? ME?
I WASN'T TRYING TO ACT LIKE A BIG SHOT.
WHAT'S HE TALKING ABOUT?
...WHAT HE'S TALKING ABOUT.
TMP


WHY DID HE GET MAD ALL OF A SUDDEN?
WHY DID MIYAMAE SAY THAT STUFF TO ME?

MR. KANNO!
MY HEAD'S SPINNING.
...BUT HE KEEPS HURTING MY FEELINGS.
I HARDLY KNOW HIM...

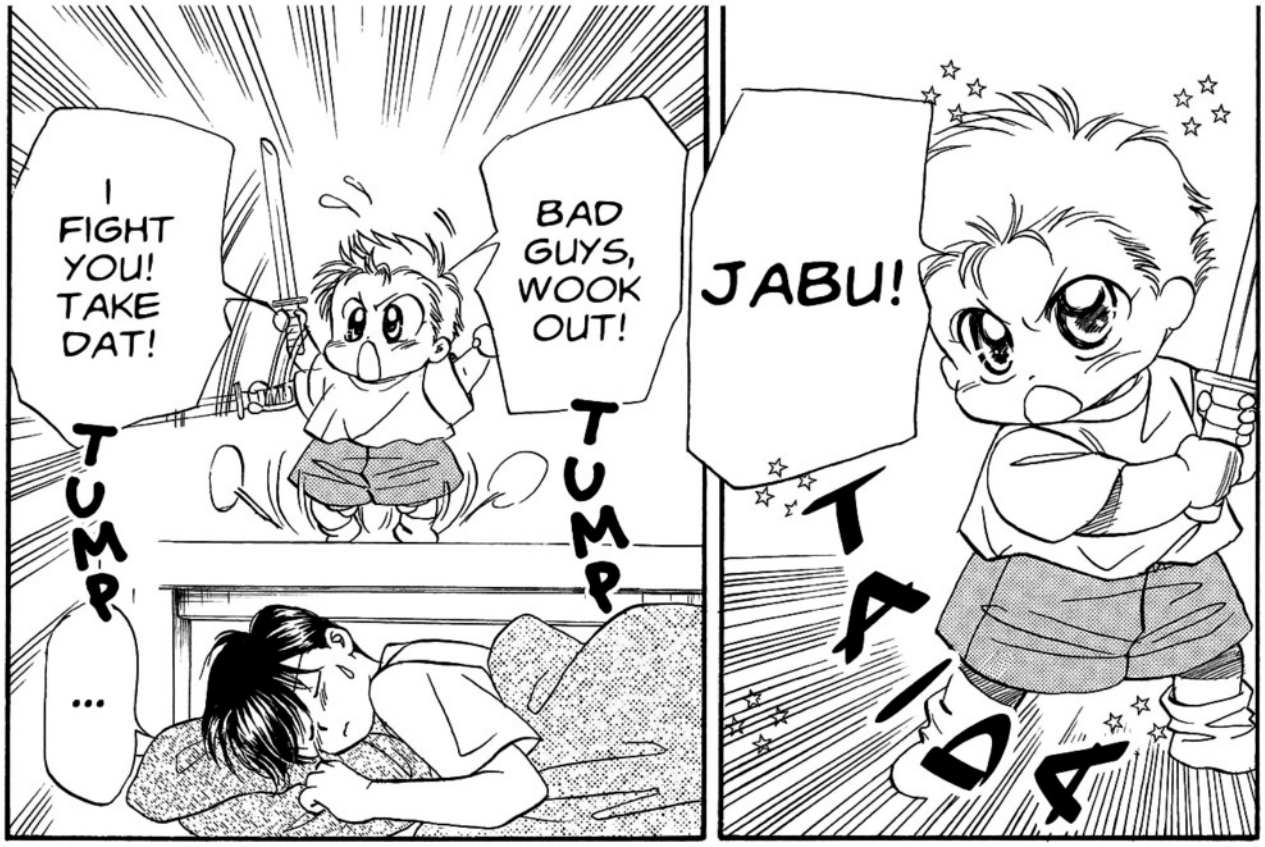
WHAT'S MIYAMAE'S PROBLEM?
GEEZ ...
NO RUNNING
He's on his way to the staff room.

CLICK-CLICK
CLICK-CLICK

I NEED...
...SOMEBODY TO TALK TO!

I SHOULDN'T HAVE LASHED OUT AT ENOKI LIKE THAT.
HMM
TMP
TMP
GEEZ...
KLANG
KLANG
KLANG
KLANG
BUT IT WAS HIS OWN FAULT.
GREEN KUNINO
NOW I FEEL CRUMMY.
HELLO, MIYAMAE RESI-DENCE.
HUH?
AND HE LOOKED SO HAPPY.
RING
RING
HE DIDN'T HAVE TO GO ON AND ON ABOUT IT.
HE ACTED LIKE EVERY-THING WAS FINE AND DANDY.
CHAK
KLAK KLAK
HE SHOULD'VE...
...JUST TOLD ME WHAT HIS FATHER DID FOR A LIVING AND SHUT UP.

I'M CAL-LING...
...FROM MY WORKPLACE. I'M ON MY BREAK.
HOW ABOUT YOU, MOM? HOW ARE YOU DOING?
I'M OKAY.
I'M FINE.
HOW ARE YOU, YUTA?
MOM?
WUZZ
...CAN WE MEET TOMOR-ROW?
I HAVE THE DAY OFF.
WUZZ
LISTEN, YUTA...
TMp
TMp
...
HEWE ...
...I COME!


I FIGHT YOU! TAKE DAT!
BAD GUYS, WOOK OUT!
TUMP
TUMP
...
JABU!
TAIDA

HE'S SO NOISY.
GRRR
GRRR
GRRR

OH!
AH...
TUMP
TUMP

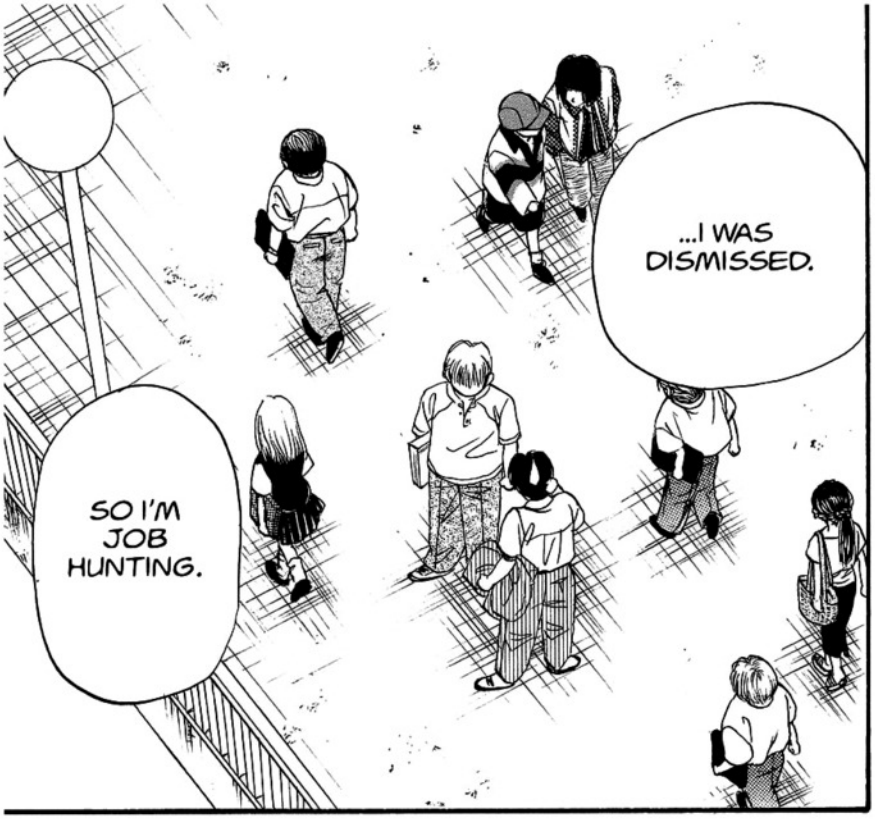
HEHO
I'M NOT FEELING WELL, MINORU. CAN YOU BE A GOOD BOY AND PLAY BY YOURSELF?

WET'S PWAY! PEASE?
BWAZA GO SEEP?
...

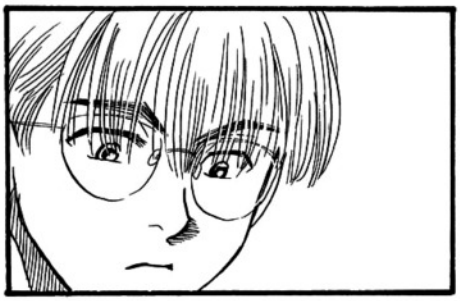
NO!
GRR
MINORU!
I NEED TO REST. UNDERSTAND?
PINCH
OW!
HE'S SO DEFIANT.
GRR...
...
I'D TELL YOU TO GO HOME AND REST, BUT MINORU PROBABLY WOULDN'T LET YOU.
!!
ZING
ZING ZING ZING
THROB
IT HURTS...
HUH?
MY STOMACH HURTS.
TAKUYA? WHAT'S WRONG? ARE YOU SICK?

MAYBE HE CAN TELL ME WHAT I CAN'T TELL MYSELF.
I TOLD HIM I'D SEE HOW I FELT IN THE MORNING.
TOMORROW I'LL TALK TO MR. KANNO.
DAD TOLD ME TO GO SEE A DOCTOR.
MY STOMACH HURT ALL EVENING...
... SO I COULDN'T EAT VERY MUCH.
I DIDN'T WANT DAD AND MINORU TO WORRY ABOUT ME, SO I TOLD THEM I WAS JUST TIRED.
THE NEXT DAY...
WUNN
KUM ANOI STA TION
WUNN
IT'S STILL EARLY.
TWO O'CLOCK.
WUNN
WUNN
MINORU, DO YOU THINK TAKUYA'S HIDING SOMETHING FROM ME?
PUDDING! YUM!
Clueless
HMPH...

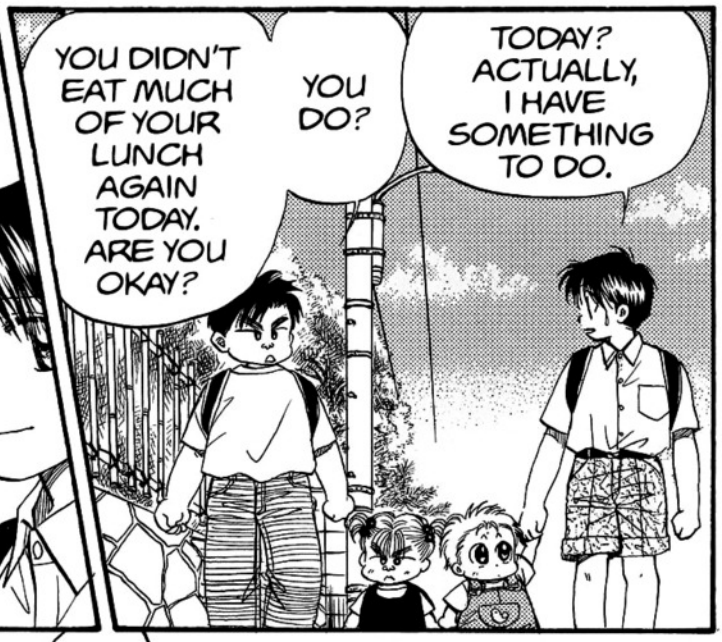
Pelco
WHAT?
IT'S ME, MIYAMAE.
AREN'T YOU MR. KANNO?
KANNO?
THAT'S RIGHT. YOU WORKED THERE PART-TIME FOR A WHILE. I WAS YOUR SECTION CHIEF.
...FOR TREASURE CORPORATION.
OH, YOU WORK...
It's been a while.
MIYAMAE?
WHEN YOU QUIT, I ASSUMED YOU'D FOUND A PERMANENT TEACHING POSITION.
OH, REALLY?
WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE AT THIS TIME OF DAY, MR. MIYAMAE?
I TEACH AT A PRIVATE SUPPLEMENTARY SCHOOL.
YES, I AM.
ARE YOU WORKING IN KUMANOI?
GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN.


...I WAS DISMISSED.
SO I'M JOB HUNTING.

HA HA...
TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH...



I'M FINE.


YOU DIDN'T EAT MUCH OF YOUR LUNCH AGAIN TODAY. ARE YOU OKAY?
YOU DO?
TODAY? ACTUALLY, I HAVE SOMETHING TO DO.

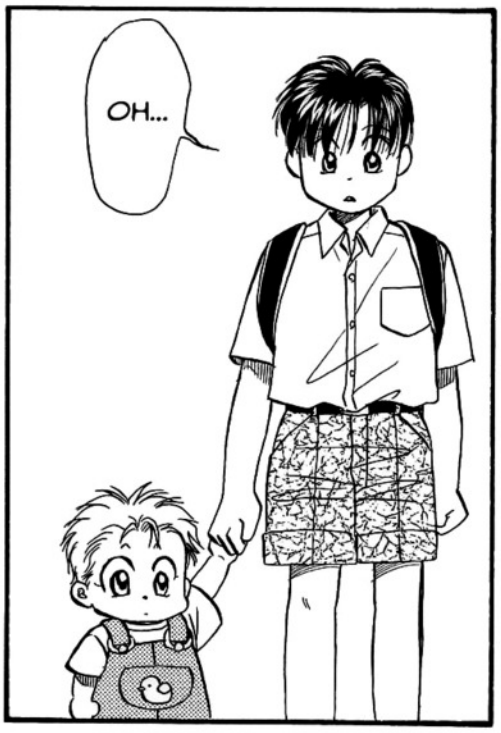
TAKUYA, CAN I COME OVER TO YOUR HOUSE TODAY?

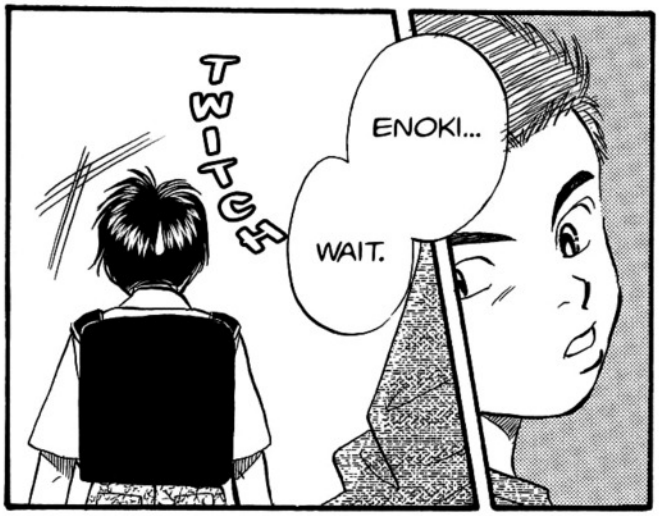
HE'S SO CRUEL.
WHUP
WHUP
TAKUYA ...
YEAH.

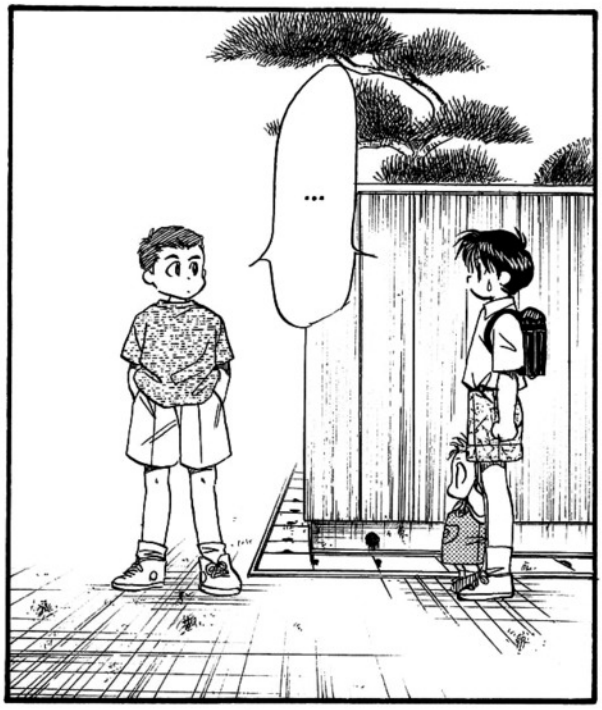
GLOOM

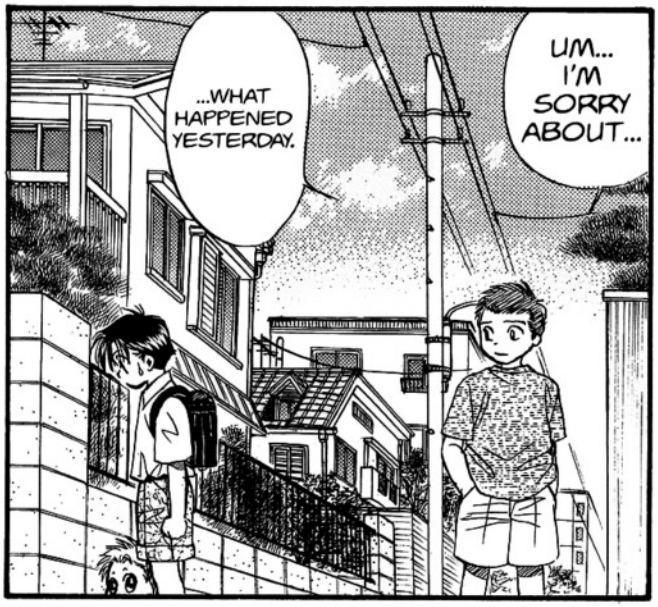
...

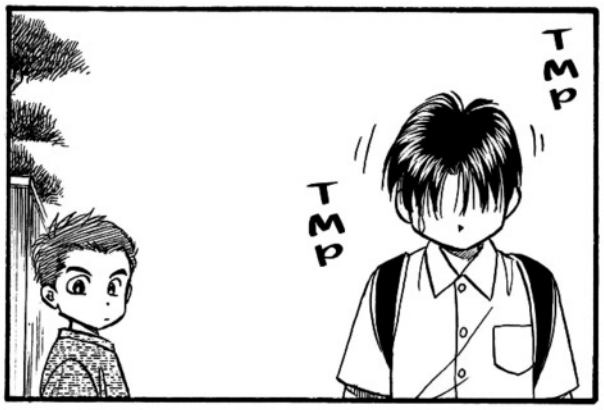
SEE YOU, GON.
BYE.


OH...

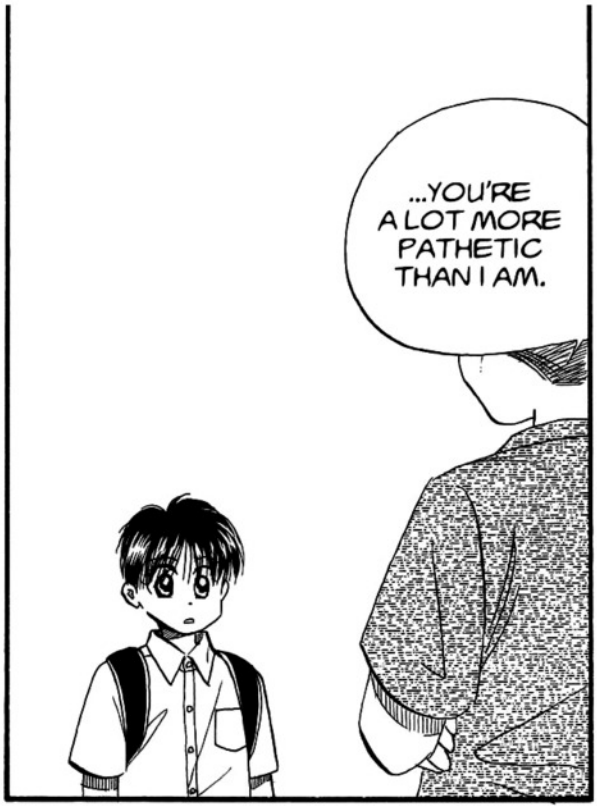

TWITCH
ENOKI...
WAIT.


...


...WHAT HAPPENED YESTERDAY.
UM... I'M SORRY ABOUT...

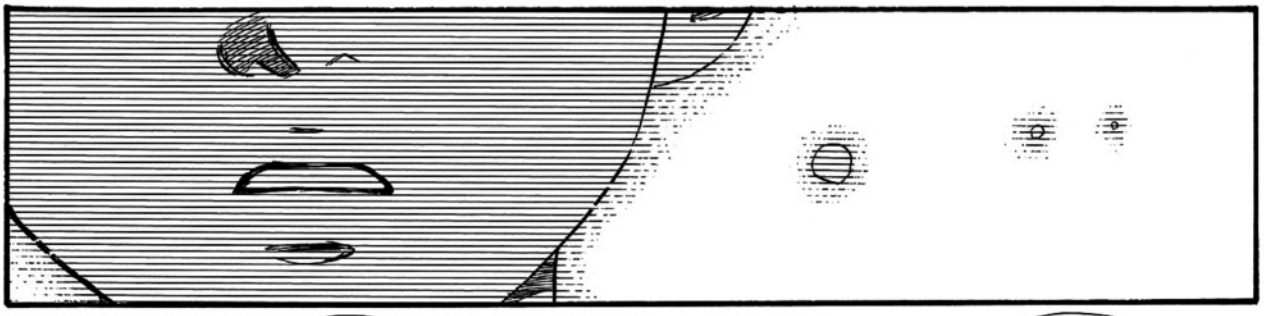

TMP
TMP

OH?
BUT YOUR LIFE ISN'T EASY EITHER.
YOU HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR BROTHER AND TAKE THE PLACE OF HIS MOTHER.
I GOT A LITTLE ANNOYED.
A LOT OF STUFF HAS BEEN HAPPENING TO ME LATELY.
HUH?
...
HMM...
...THE WAY YOU ACT MAKES ME WONDER IF WE HAVE ANYTHING IN COMMON AT ALL!
MIYAMAE...

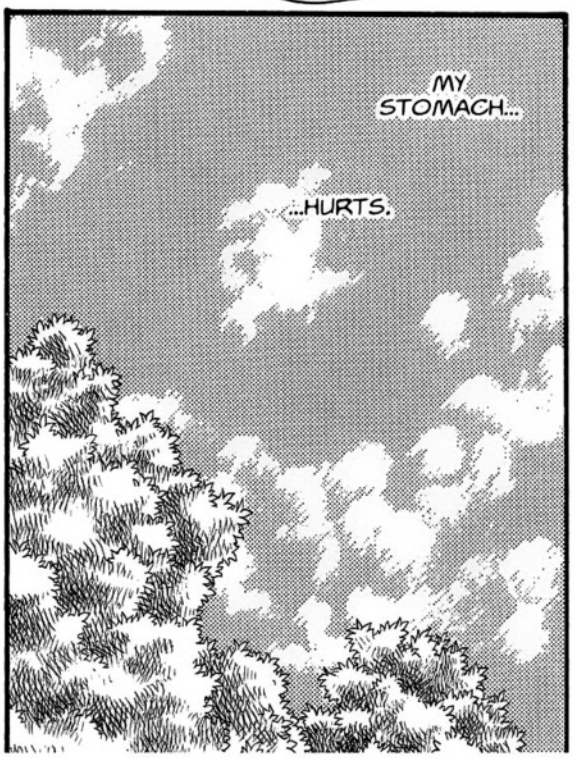

...YOU'RE A LOT MORE PATHETIC THAN I AM.

I GUESS ...

I'M GOING TO SEE MY MOM NOW.
BUT I WAS WRONG.
I THOUGHT WE WERE ALIKE.



WELL, I GOTTA GO.
I'M SORRY I THOUGHT WE WERE THE SAME.

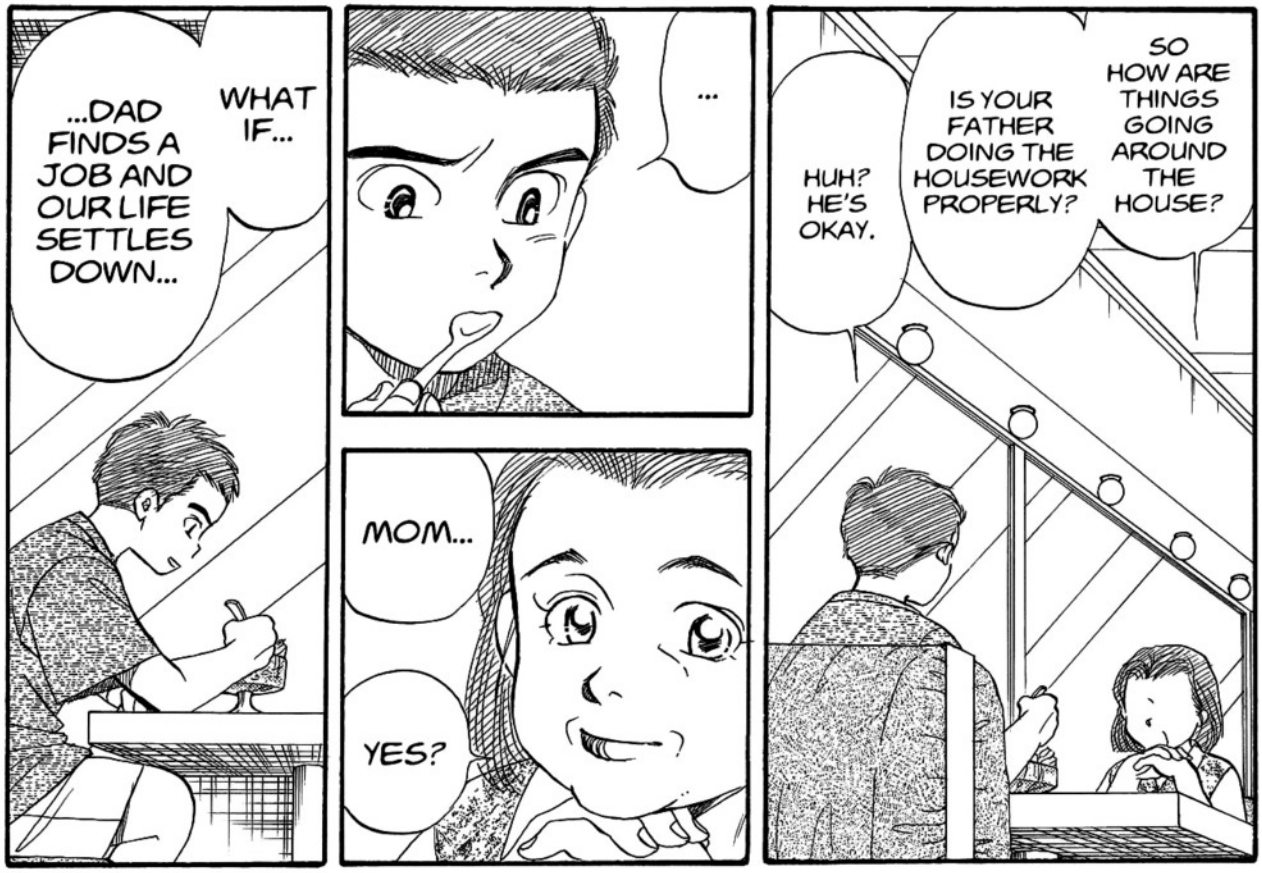

MY STOMACH...
...HURTS.

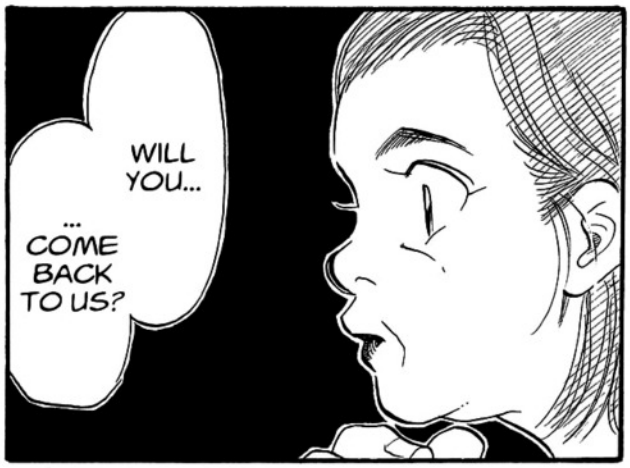
ZING

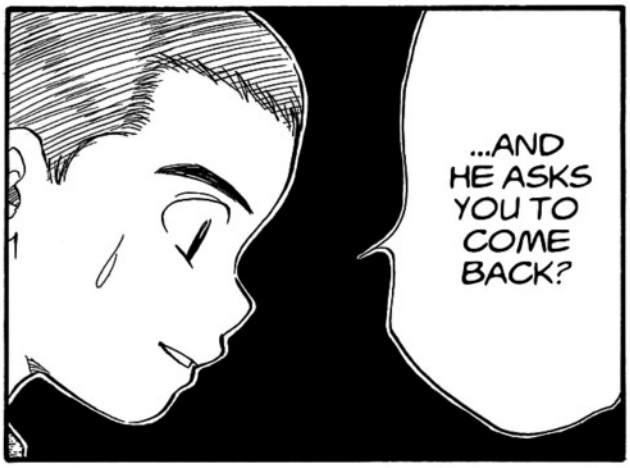
HUH?

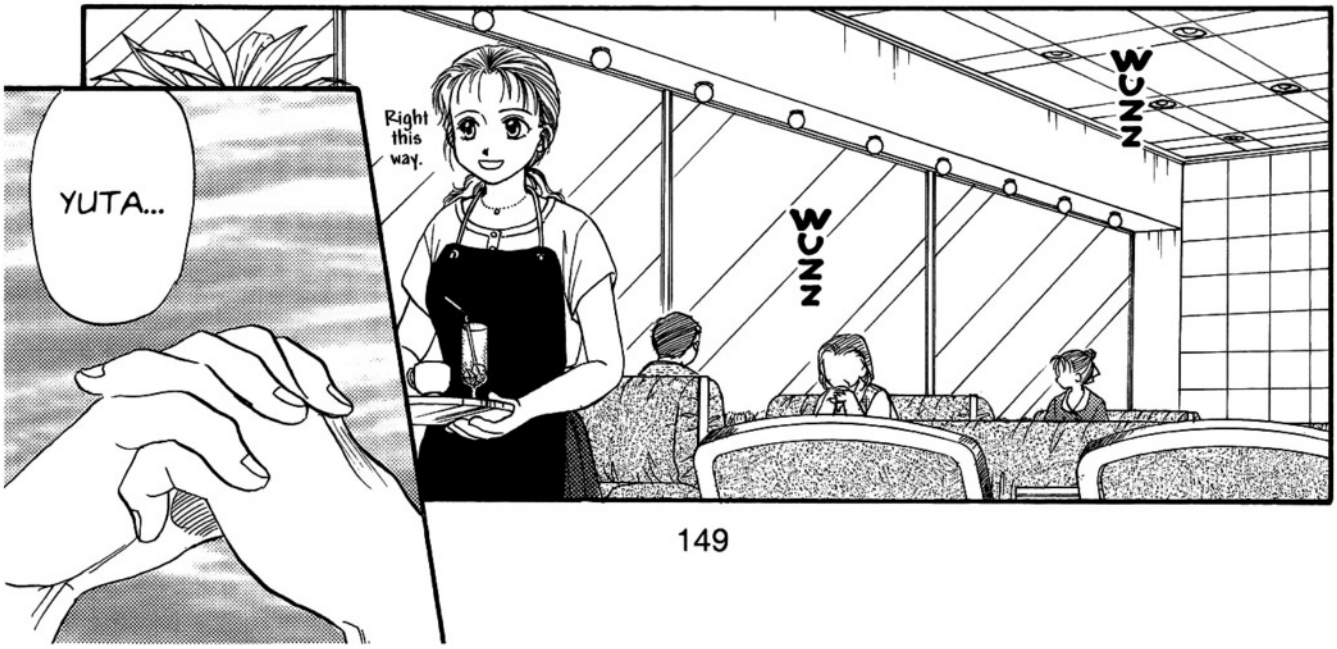
HELLO!
WHAP
!
WHEW
...THINK I'M PATHETIC?
DO YOU JUST...
...BUT WHAT DO YOU GET OUT OF TALKING WITH ME?
YOU SAID PEOPLE HAVE TO HAVE SOMETHING TO OFFER EACH OTHER...
MR. KANNO, THERE'S SOMETHING I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

WOW...
HUH?
WHAT A QUES-TION!
WUZZ
WUZZ
BEEP BEEP
KLAK
KLAK
I GUESS ...
...DAD STILL HASN'T FOUND A JOB.
MAYBE HE'S HOLDING OUT FOR ONE THAT'S AS GOOD AS HIS OLD JOB.

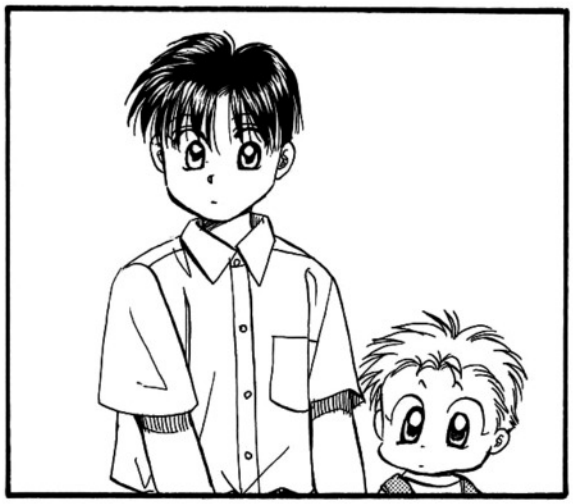

WHAT IF...
...DAD FINDS A JOB AND OUR LIFE SETTLES DOWN...
...
MOM...
YES?
SO HOW ARE THINGS GOING AROUND THE HOUSE?
IS YOUR FATHER DOING THE HOUSEWORK PROPERLY?
HUH? HE'S OKAY.


WILL YOU...
... COME BACK TO US?


...AND HE ASKS YOU TO COME BACK?


YUTA...
Right this way.
WUNN
WUNN

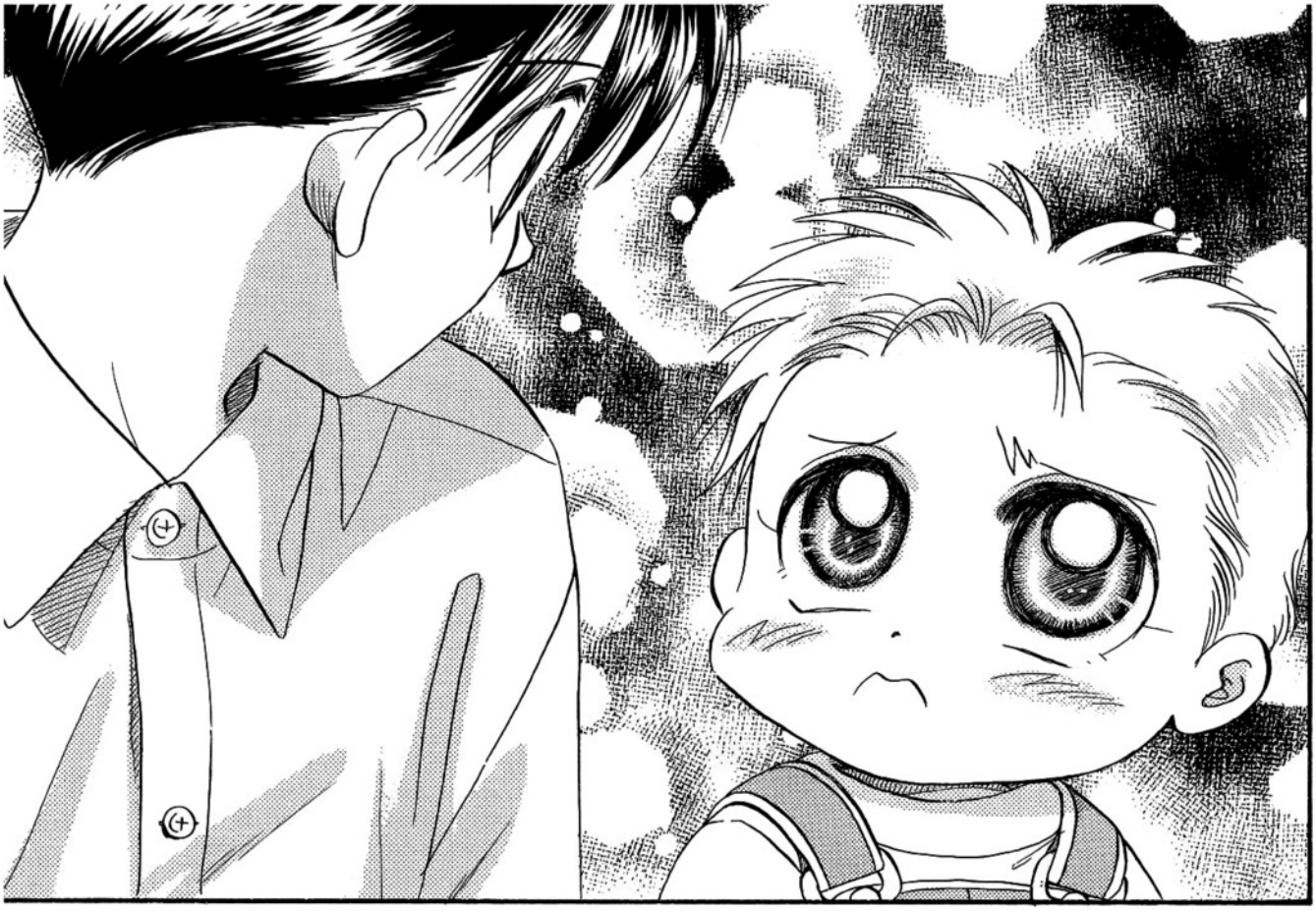
I'M SORRY.
WUNN
WUNN
TAKUYA ...
...I DON'T THINK YOU'RE PATHETIC.
WHEN I HAPPENED TO SEE YOU THE OTHER DAY...
...IT SEEMED LIKE YOU HAD SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND.
BUT I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT IT WAS.

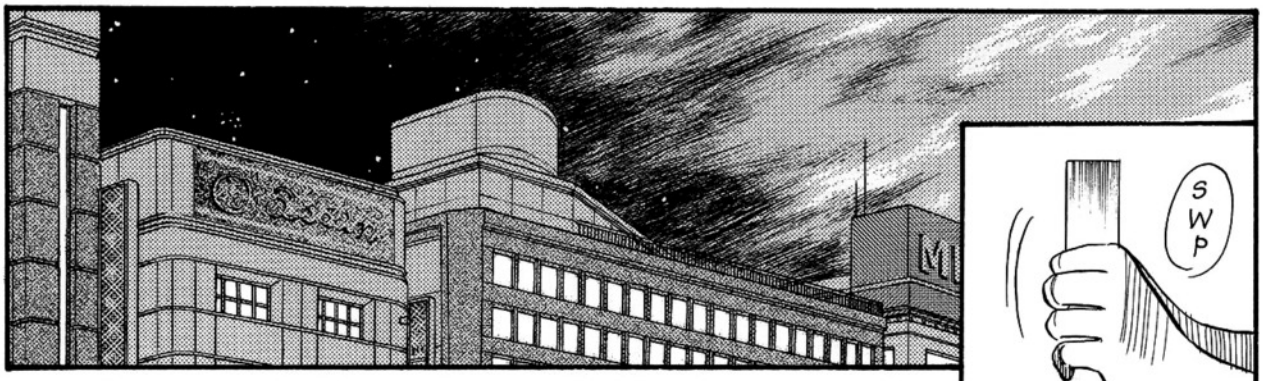


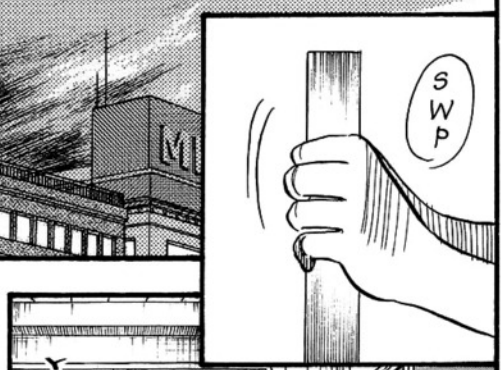
I JUST THOUGHT YOU MIGHT NEED SOMEONE TO TALK TO.
IF I CAN HELP YOU, THAT'S REWARD ENOUGH.

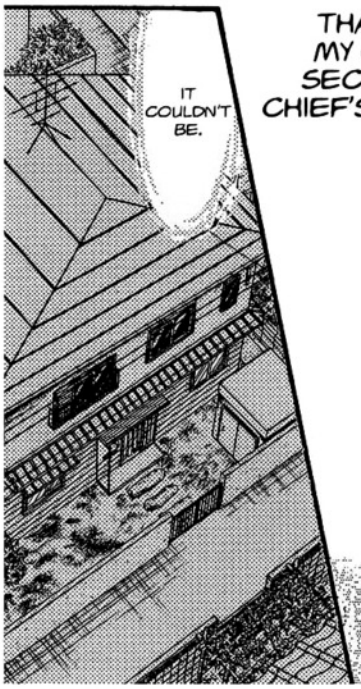
SIGH
...I STILL DON'T HAVE A PERMANENT JOB.
DOES THAT MAKE ME PATHETIC?
WHAT?
SOMETIMES WORDS CAN MEAN MORE THAN ONE THING.
FOR EXAMPLE ...
SO THAT'S IT, EH?
UH...
DID SOMEBODY SAY YOU WERE PATHETIC?
...MISUSED THAT WORD, I THINK.
WHOEVER SAID YOU WERE PATHETIC ...
"PATHETIC" DOESN'T HAVE TO MEAN SOMETHING BAD. IT CAN JUST MEAN THAT SOMEONE'S HAVING A HARD TIME.
I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.
WHUP
THKO
THKO
UM...
MIYAMAE SAID I WAS A PHONY.
...
I DON'T WANT PEOPLE TO THINK I HAVE A HARD LIFE AND FEEL SORRY FOR ME.
BUT I'M JUST TRYING TO LIVE A NORMAL LIFE.

I KNOW.
LITTLE BY LITTLE...
...I TOLD HIM WHAT MIYAMAE HAD SAID TO ME.
MR. KANNO DIDN'T SAY MUCH. HE MOSTLY JUST LISTENED.
I GUESS THAT'S WHY...
AS I TALKED, I STARTED TO SEE THE TRUTH.
...I DON'T LIKE TO TALK TO MIYAMAE.
THAT WAS IT.
HE'S WOR-RIED.
HUH?
...
I...
...DIDN'T LIKE MIYAMAE.





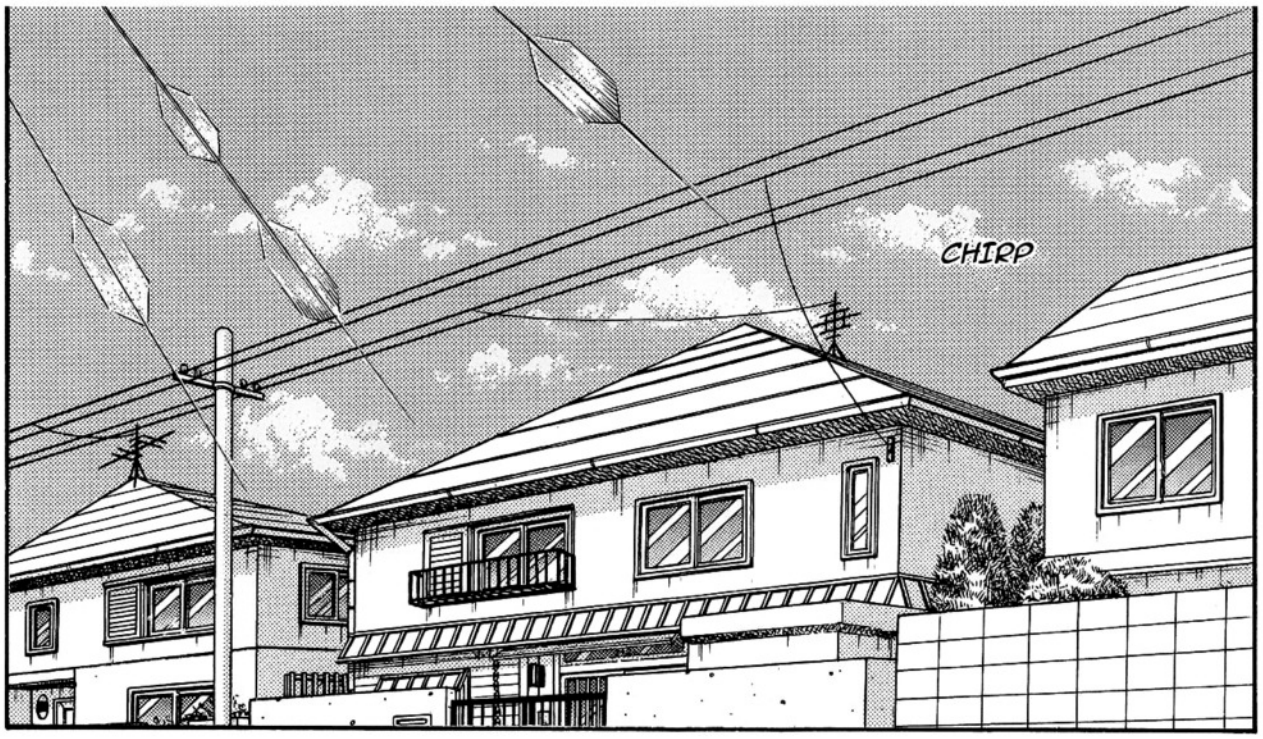




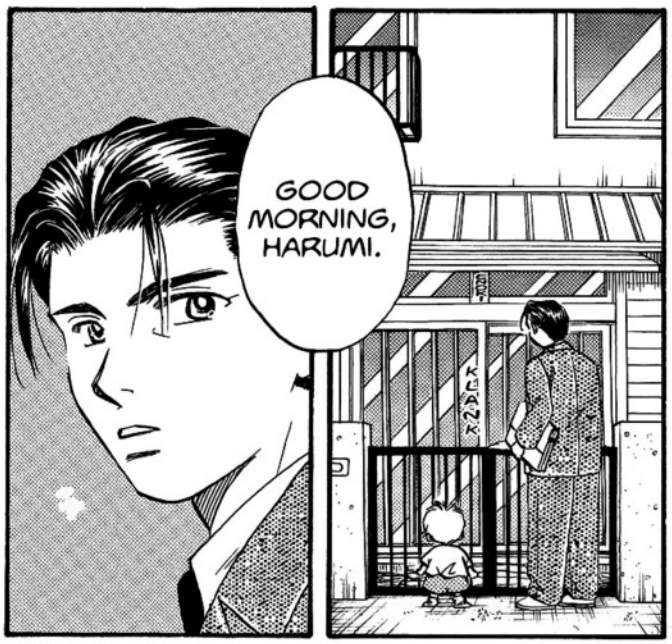
THAT'S MY OLD SECTION CHIEF'S NAME.

Chapter 90 / The End

Chapter 91

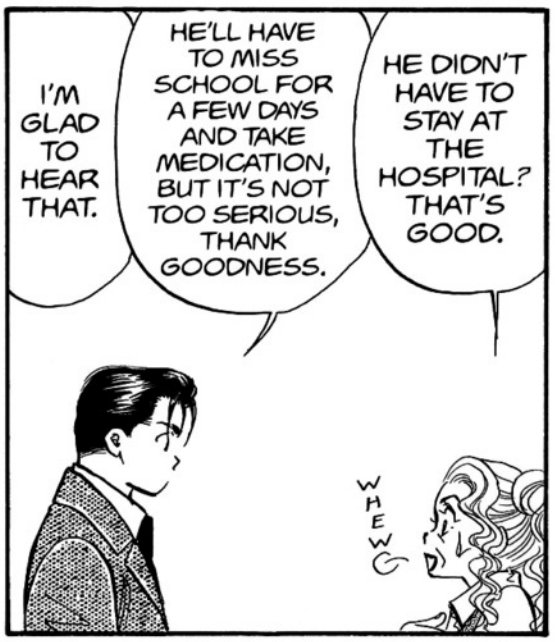

CHIRP

I HEARD YOU TOOK TAKUYA TO THE HOSPITAL LAST NIGHT.
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HIM?
A MINOR CASE OF GASTRITIS. HE'S RESTING AT HOME NOW.


GOOD MORNING, HARUMI.
KLANK

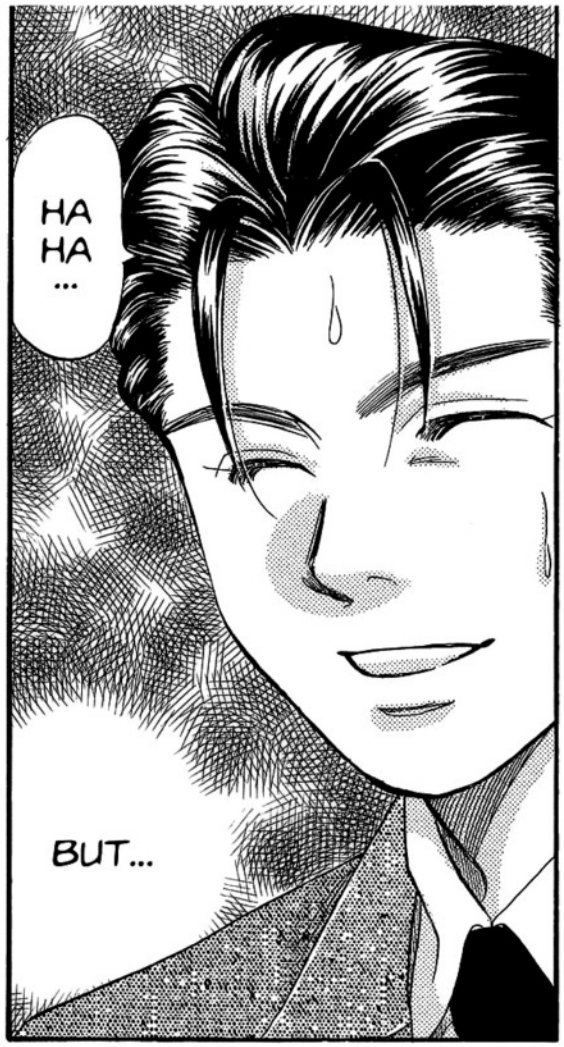
THEY THINK IT'S STRESS.
BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S TROUBLING HIM.
IT'S YOUR JOB TO FIND OUT, HARUMI.

GAS-TRI-TIS, EH?
DID HE EAT TOO MUCH? FOOD POISONING? STRESS? I WONDER IF SOMETHING'S TROUBLING HIM.
It's hard to be a kid these days.

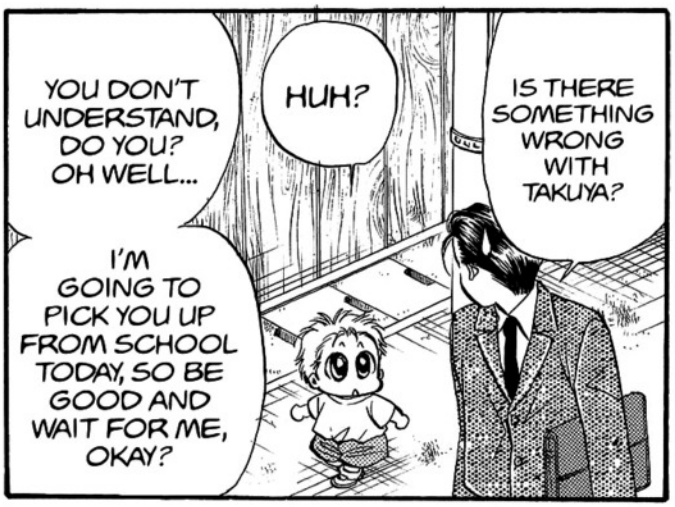

HE DIDN'T HAVE TO STAY AT THE HOSPITAL? THAT'S GOOD.
HE'LL HAVE TO MISS SCHOOL FOR A FEW DAYS AND TAKE MEDICATION, BUT IT'S NOT TOO SERIOUS, THANK GOODNESS.
I'M GLAD TO HEAR THAT.
WHEW

I'M A LOUSY FATHER.
MINORU...

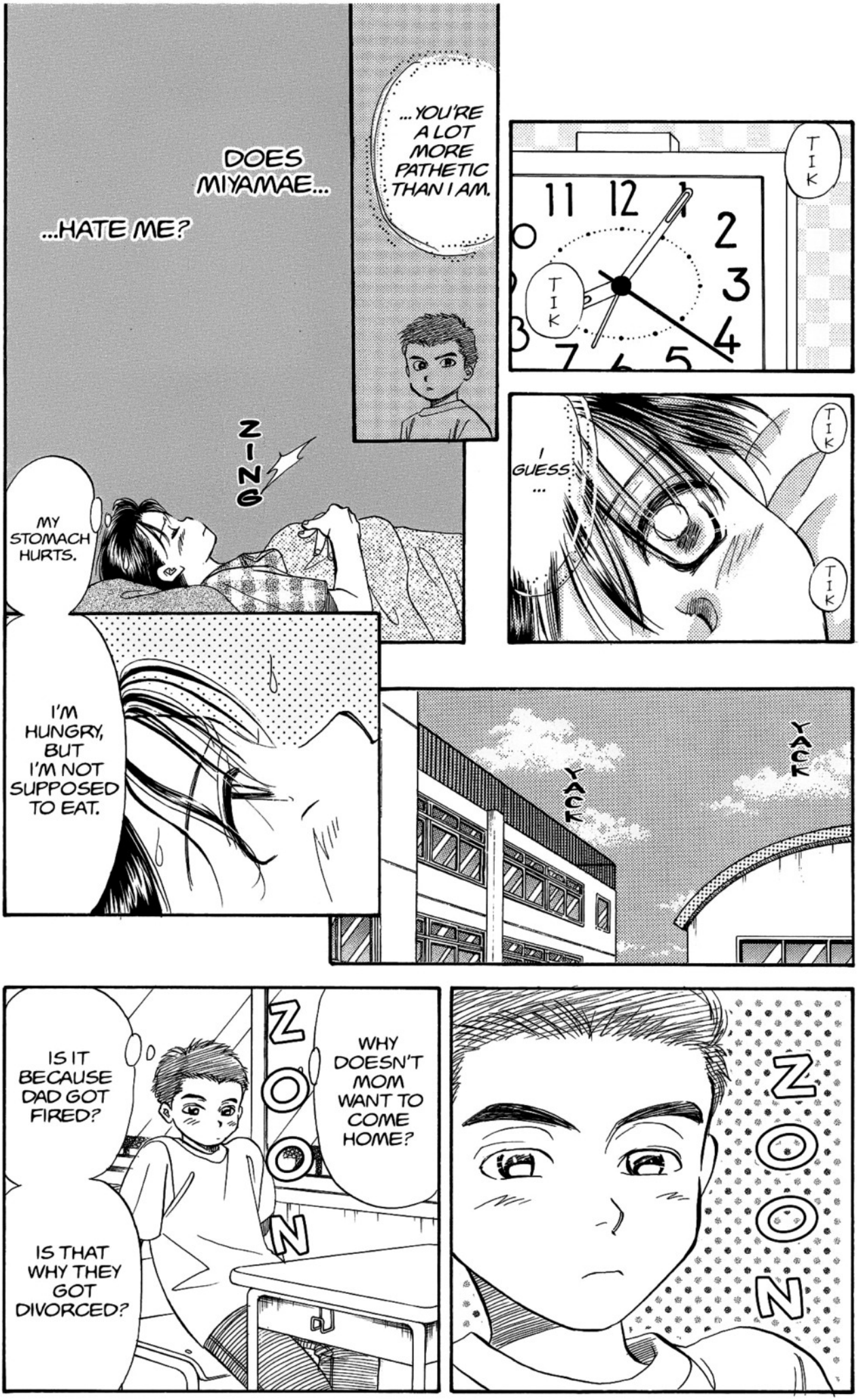
IF I ASK HIM WHAT'S WRONG, HE SAYS, "NOTHING."
...HE WON'T TELL ME.
I CAN'T MAKE HIM TELL ME.
SOB
DADDY?
KANAZAWA CLINIC


HA HA ...
BUT...

TIK TIK
TIK TIK


IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG WITH TAKUYA?
HUH?
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, DO YOU? OH WELL...
I'M GOING TO PICK YOU UP FROM SCHOOL TODAY, SO BE GOOD AND WAIT FOR ME, OKAY?

NO, DADDY! I WANT BWAZA PICK ME UP!
HMPH
ZANG
MINORU! DON'T YOU LIKE ME?


...YOU'RE A LOT MORE PATHETIC THAN I AM.
DOES MIYAMAE...
...HATE ME?
ZING
MY STOMACH HURTS.
I'M HUNGRY, BUT I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO EAT.
TIK
TIK
TIK
I GUESS...
TIK
TIK
YACK
YACK
IS IT BECAUSE DAD GOT FIRED?
IS THAT WHY THEY GOT DIVORCED?
ZOON
WHY DOESN'T MOM WANT TO COME HOME?
ZOON

FOR SOME REASON...
...WHENEVER I SEE HIM, I FEEL LIKE RUBBING DIRT IN HIS FACE.
ENOKI...
...SEEMED KIND OF DOWN YESTERDAY.
THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW.
WHEN DO YOU THINK YOU CAN COME BACK TO SCHOOL, TAKUYA?
THANKS, GON.
IS THIS HOME-WORK? WHEN'S IT DUE?
THEY'RE TODAY'S HANDOUTS.
HERE.
I DON'T KNOW. DIFFERENT THINGS, I GUESS.
WHAT CAUSES IT?
IT'S WHEN YOUR STOMACH GETS INFLAMED AND HURTS.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON, BUT YOU'RE HAVING A HARD TIME, HUH?
YOU THINK SO?
MAYBE BY THE END OF THE WEEK.
SO WHAT IS GASTRITIS ANYWAY?

YEAH?
HEY, GON...
TOMOR-ROW'S FRIDAY!
WILL YOU DO ME A FAVOR TOMOR-ROW?
THEN I'LL PICK HIM UP FOR YOU TOMOR-ROW.
MY DAD'S GOING TO PICK HIM UP, BUT THANKS ANYWAY.
Leave it to me!
I GOTTA PICK UP HIRO. WANT ME TO BRING MINORU HOME?
FAVOR? SURE.
IF IT'S NOT ABOUT SCHOOL.
WHAM
WHAM
WHAM
WHAM
DERE!
TAKE DAT!
Minoru entertaining himself
TAKUYA...

Author's Note Part 6

The kids we saw were all cute.

He seems to be about Takuya's age, but he's smoking...

When his cigarette smoke wafted over to me, somebody said, "Sorry." But it was the father, not the boy, who apologized.

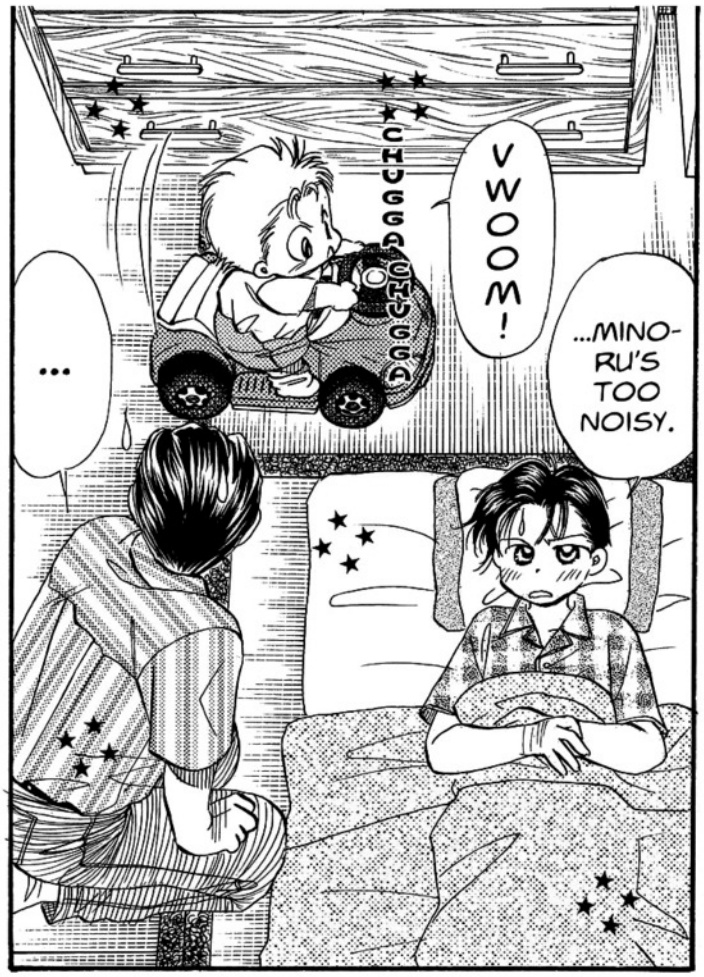
Hey, straighten out your son!

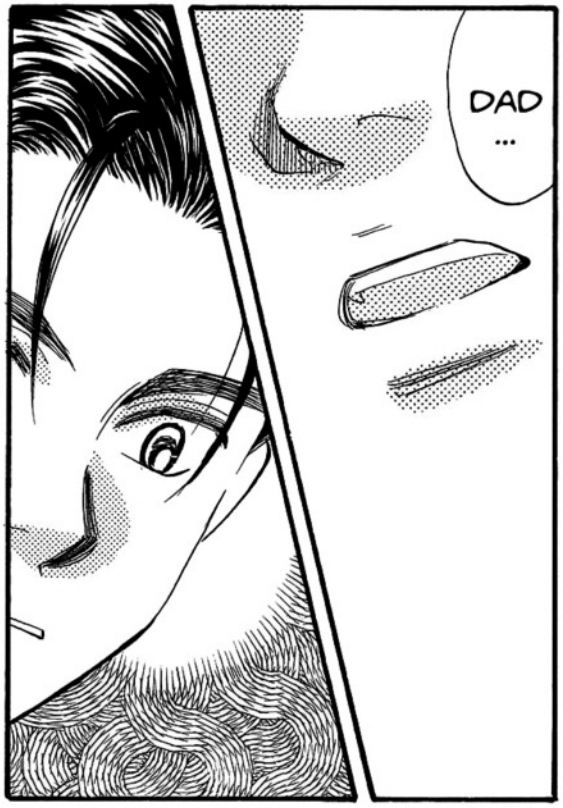
I joined a group of kids and took a lot of photos with the characters. How silly!

☆ Most memorable attraction—*Terminator 2* (It's a 3D movie. That's not a Disney movie, is it? Ha ha!)

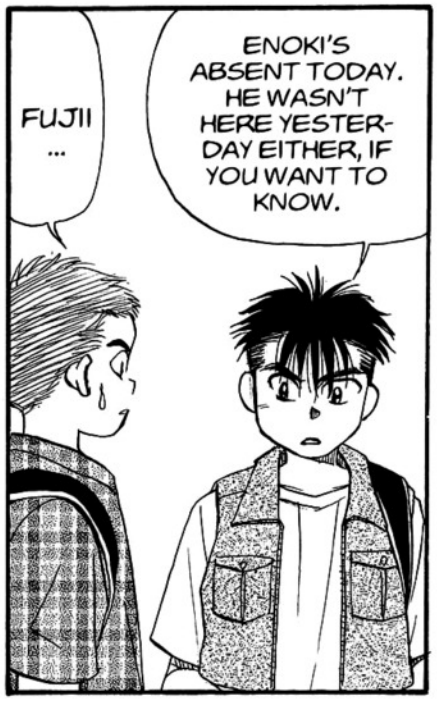
Well, bye for now!

February 1997


...
VWOOM!
CHUGGA CHUGGA
...MINO-RU'S TOO NOISY.


DAD ...

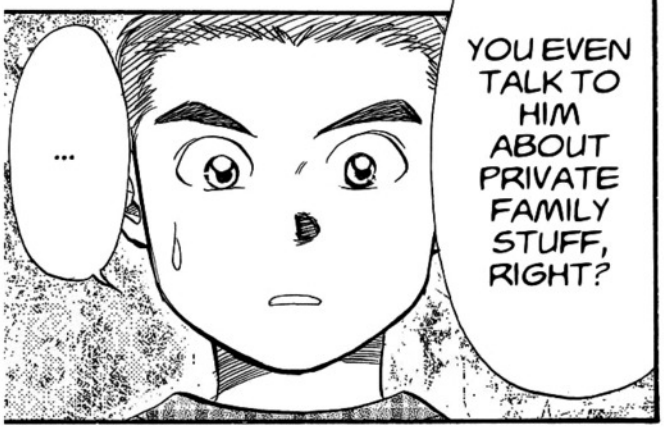
YACK
YACK
YAY
YAY
FRIDAY AFTER SCHOOL ...


FUJII ...
ENOKI'S ABSENT TODAY. HE WASN'T HERE YESTER-DAY EITHER, IF YOU WANT TO KNOW.

...WHY DON'T YOU JUST COME BY OUR CLASS-ROOM?
INSTEAD OF CHECKING HIS NOOK TO SEE IF HE'S AT SCHOOL ...
!

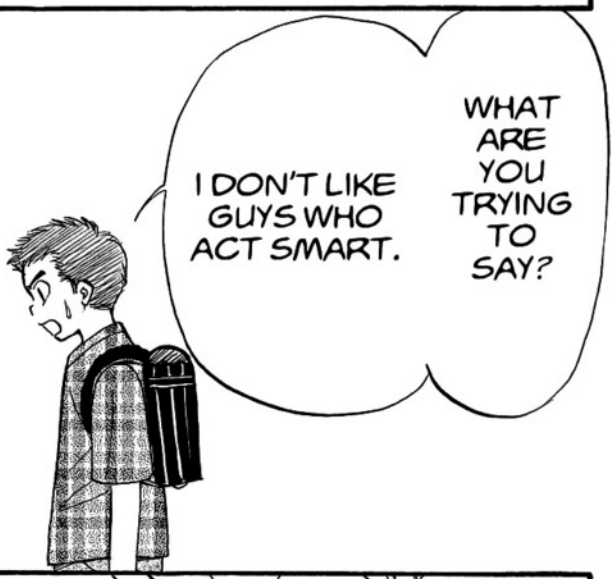
SWUP
NAOYA ITO
ENO
FOUND IT!

NOTHING.
AREN'T YOU HIS FRIEND, MIYAMAE?


YOU EVEN TALK TO HIM ABOUT PRIVATE FAMILY STUFF, RIGHT?
...

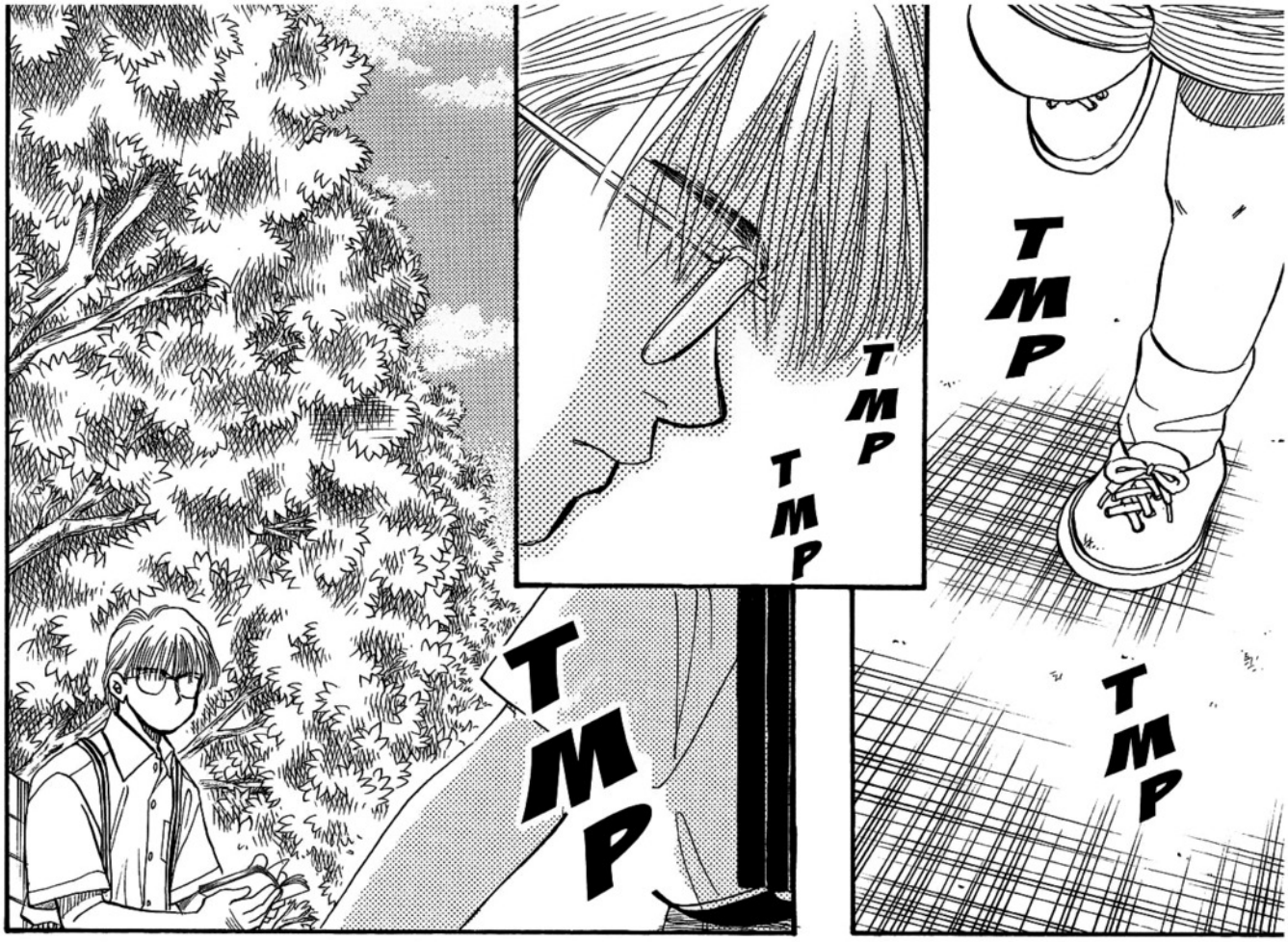
HOW'D YOU KNOW I WAS...
I DON'T KNOW.
I'M SURPRISED YOU DIDN'T KNOW HE WAS SICK.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

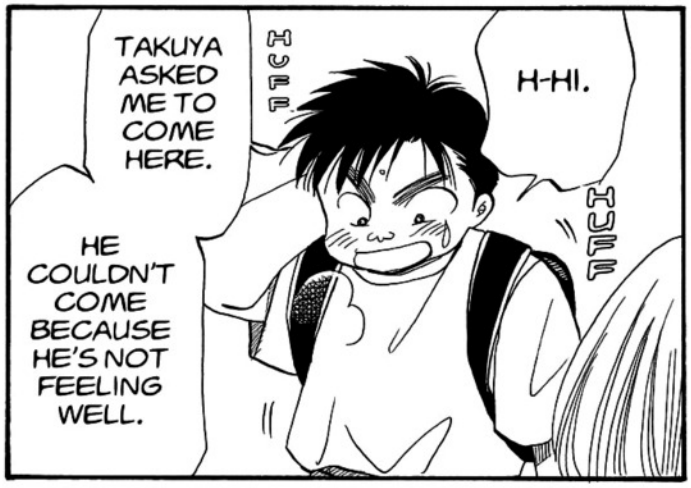
REALLY?
WELL I DON'T LIKE GUYS WHO SAY MEAN THINGS, SO I GUESS WE'RE EVEN.

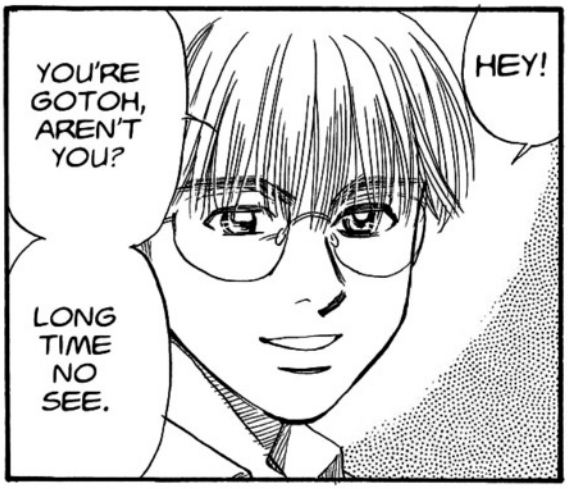

WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY?
I DON'T LIKE GUYS WHO ACT SMART.

YACK
...

IF YOU'RE GOING HOME, YOU'D BETTER WAIT A FEW MINUTES.
HUH?
WE LIVE IN THE SAME APARTMENT BUILDING.
YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO WALK HOME WITH ME, WOULD YOU?

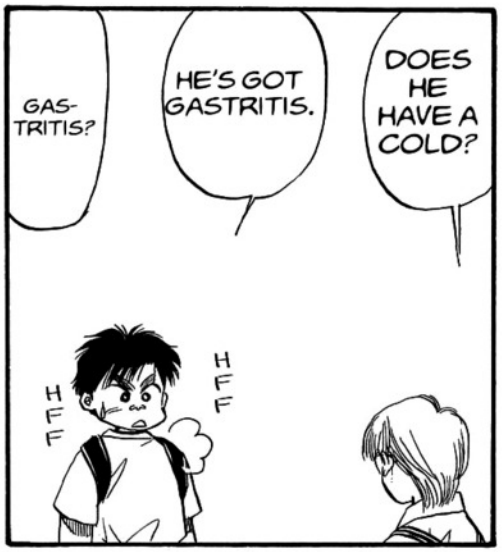

TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP


TAKUYA ASKED ME TO COME HERE.
HUFF
H-HI.
HUFF
HE COULDN'T COME BECAUSE HE'S NOT FEELING WELL.


YOU'RE GOTOH, AREN'T YOU?
HEY!
LONG TIME NO SEE.

It's not a date.
HOW COME TAKUYA AND MR. KANNO HAVE A SECRET DATE?
Hmm...
HFF
HFF
GOTOH ...

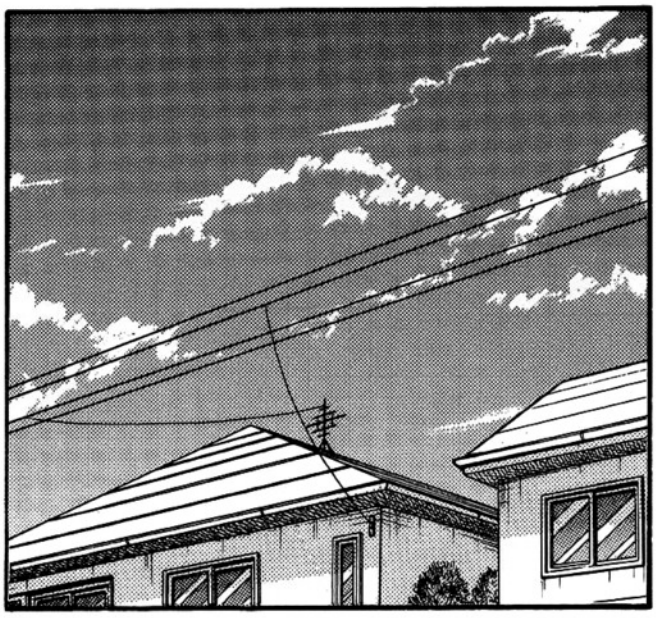
...


GAS-TRITIS?
HE'S GOT GASTRITIS.
DOES HE HAVE A COLD?
HFFF
HFF

THEN WOULD YOU DO ME A FAVOR?

I'M GOING OVER TO HIS HOUSE NOW.
WILL YOU BE SEEING ENOKI SOON?
Y-YEAH?

A LETTER?



SHWUFF

I WONDER WHAT IT SAYS?
SHF
SHF
MINORU

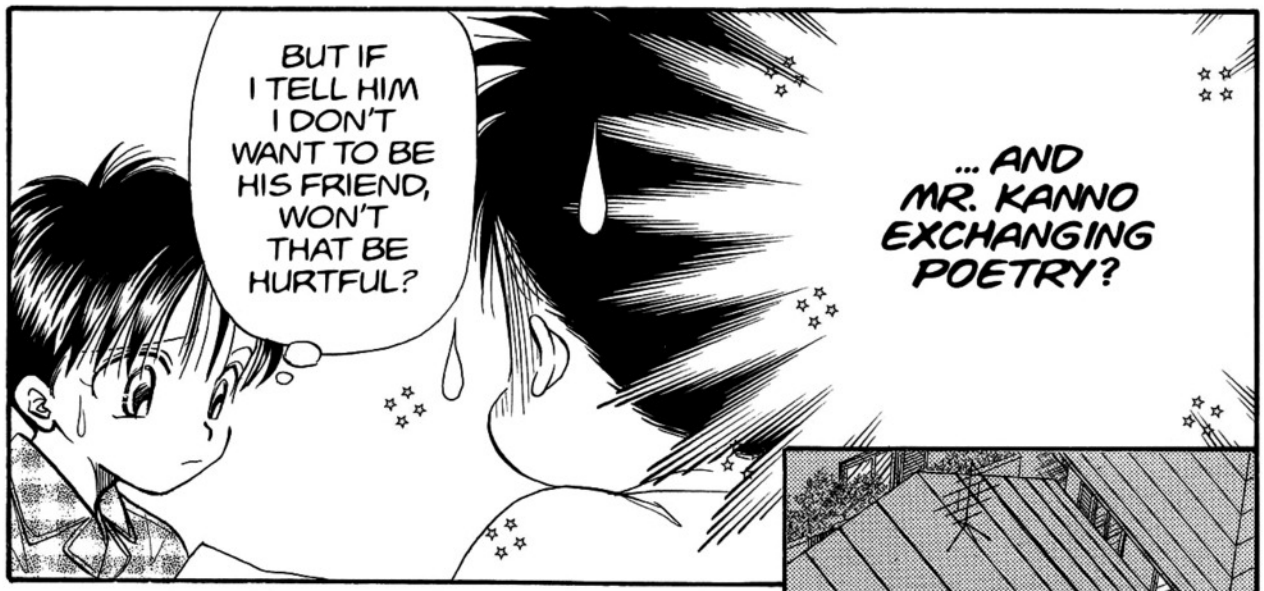
IS IT OKAY FOR YOU TO BE OUT OF BED?
YEAH. MR. KANNO ASKED ME TO GIVE IT TO YOU.
BWAZA !
YEAH, I'M FEELING BETTER.
JAPANESE TEA

STARE
STARE
NO! BWAZA, LEMME SEE!
WIP
HUH?
STARE
HIRO
Takuya,
Expressing sincere feelings and saying inconsiderate and hurtful things are not the same thing. Take good care of yourself. I hope you get well soon.
Kanno
...
LEMME SEE.
"EXPRESSING SINCERE FEELINGS..."
WELL, IF YOU SAY SO...
HUH? ARE YOU SURE? ISN'T IT PRIVATE?
YOU CAN READ IT, GON.
WHUP

TAKUYA, ARE YOU...

SHOULD I TELL MIYAMAE HOW I REALLY FEEL?
SIGH

SORT OF, I GUESS.
TAKUYA... DO YOU UNDER-STAND THIS?


BUT IF I TELL HIM I DON'T WANT TO BE HIS FRIEND, WON'T THAT BE HURTFUL?
... AND MR. KANNO EXCHANGING POETRY?

BWAZA! PWAY WIFF ME!
TUG
TUG

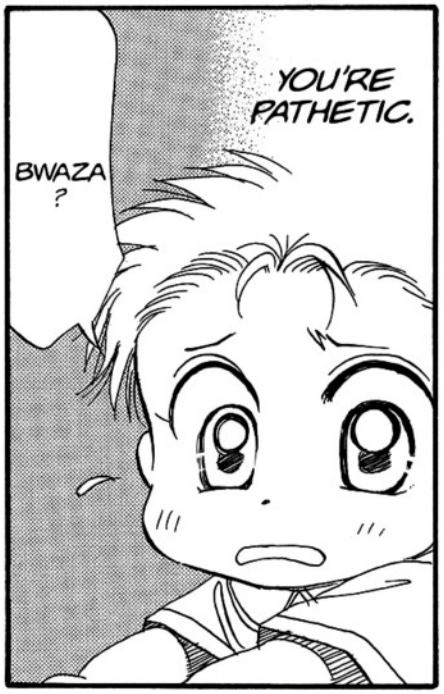
UM...
A IS 54 DEGREES, SO A PLUS B SHOULD BE SUBTRACTED FROM 180 DEGREES, AND...

OW!
ZING

NO! WET'S PWAY JABU!
GO PLAY BY YOUR-SELF, MINORU! I'M DOING MY HOME-WORK!

CWEEN UP!
SOWEE! I CWEEN UP!
SWUP
SWUP

AH!
KLUNK


YOU'RE PATHETIC.
BWAZA ?

...HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR BROTHER...
...AND TAKE THE PLACE OF HIS MOTHER.

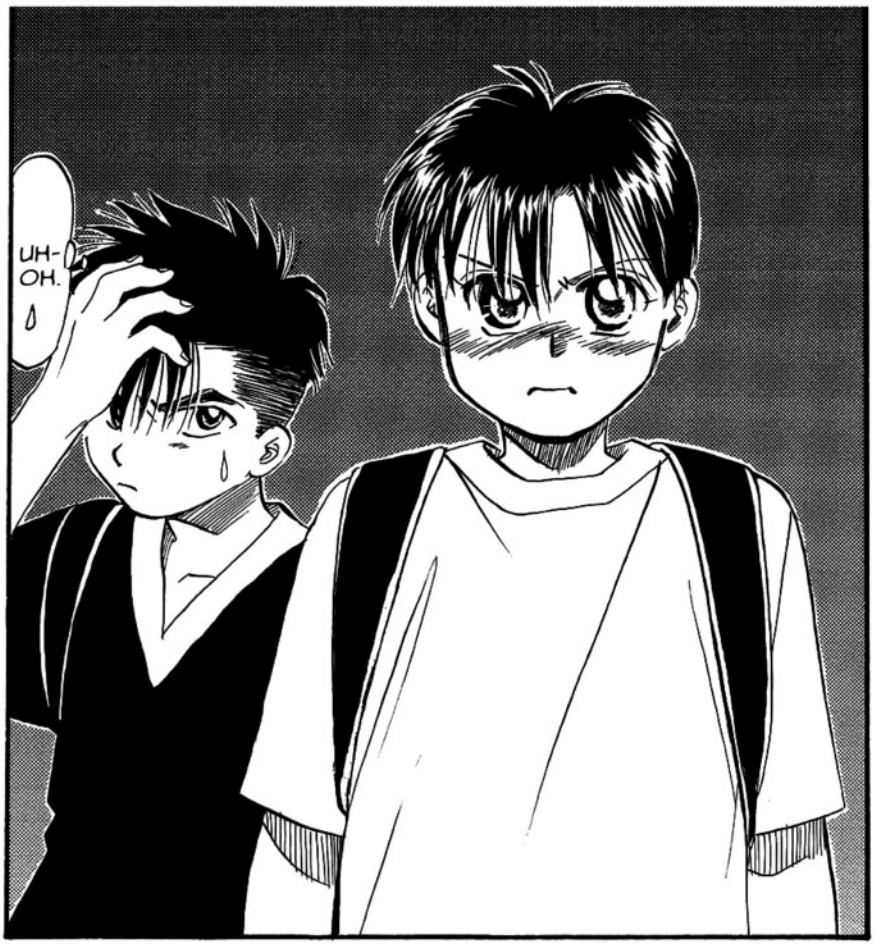
YOU...
...

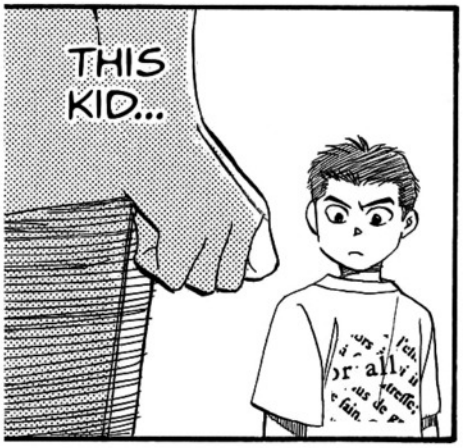
YOU IDIOT!
I DON'T GET TO DO ANY-THING...
...BECAUSE OF YOU!!
OH
MINORU...

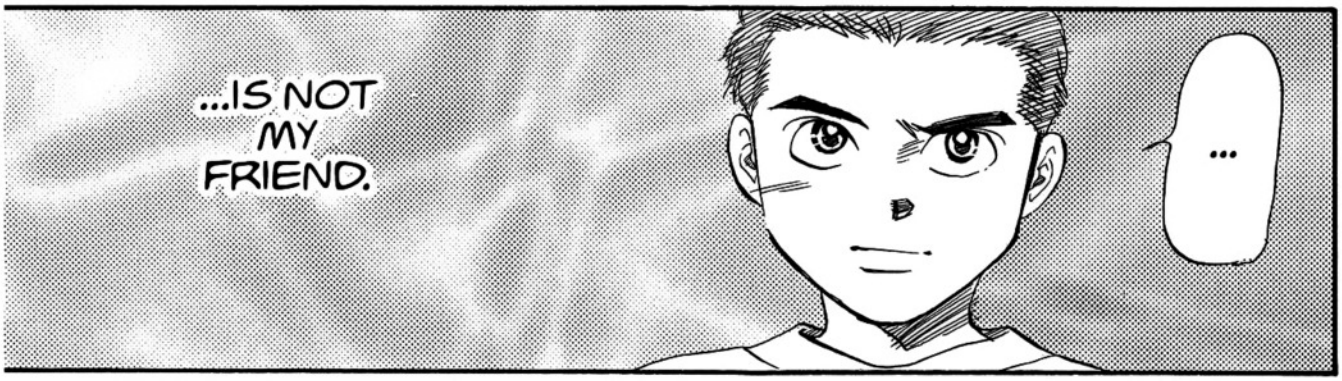
I HATE...
I'M SORRY, MINORU.
I DON'T LIKE IT.
SOB
SOB
I'M SORRY.
...THIS PART OF MYSELF!
KSHH
KSHH
SATURDAY WAS CLOUDY...
...SUNDAY WAS RAINY...
YACK
...AND MONDAY MORNING THE SUN CAME OUT AGAIN.
YACK
BUT I STILL FELT DE-PRESSED.
HEY...
...FUJII.
YACK
HEY.
YACK
KONAN

YACK
FUJII, DO YOU...
YACK
?
HE WAS REALLY SICK, HUH?
DOESN'T KNOW IT WAS GASTRITIS.
ARE YOU FEELING BETTER?
YEAH.
BUT I STILL CAN'T EAT SOLID FOOD.
I'VE BEEN LIVING ON MILK AND RICE POR-RIDGE.
YACK
YACK
WHAT?
...
YEAH, ONCE OR TWICE.
BUT... HAVE YOU EVER WISHED THEY'D DISAPPEAR?
...EVER GET TIRED OF TAKING CARE OF ICHIKA AND MA-BO?
TIRED?
I CAN'T STAND IT.
THEY'RE PESTS.
I DON'T REALLY MEAN THEM.
BUT I SAY THOSE THINGS IN THE HEAT OF THE MOMENT.
When I get really mad, I'm kind of cruel.
BUT IF I DIDN'T, HOW WOULD THEY EVER LEARN HOW OTHER PEOPLE FEEL?
SOMETIMES, WHEN I GET MAD, I SAY TERRIBLE THINGS TO THEM.
WHAT?

YACK
YACK
ENOKI DOESN'T LIKE TO TALK ABOUT HIS MOTHER.
OH?
HUH? NO REA-SON.
...
WHY DO YOU ASK?
YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT. HE'S THE KIND OF GUY WHO CAN'T LOOK REALITY IN THE FACE.
SO YOU'RE BOTH LIVING WITHOUT A MOTHER. SO WHAT? THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOU HAVE TO BE FRIENDS, YUTA.
BUT THEN HE WANTS EVERYBODY TO THINK HE'S SO GREAT FOR TAKING CARE OF HIS BROTHER.
I THINK IT MAKES HIM FEEL BAD.
HUH?
HEY, YUTA.
H...
BEING AROUND A PHONY LIKE THAT GETS OLD FAST.
...

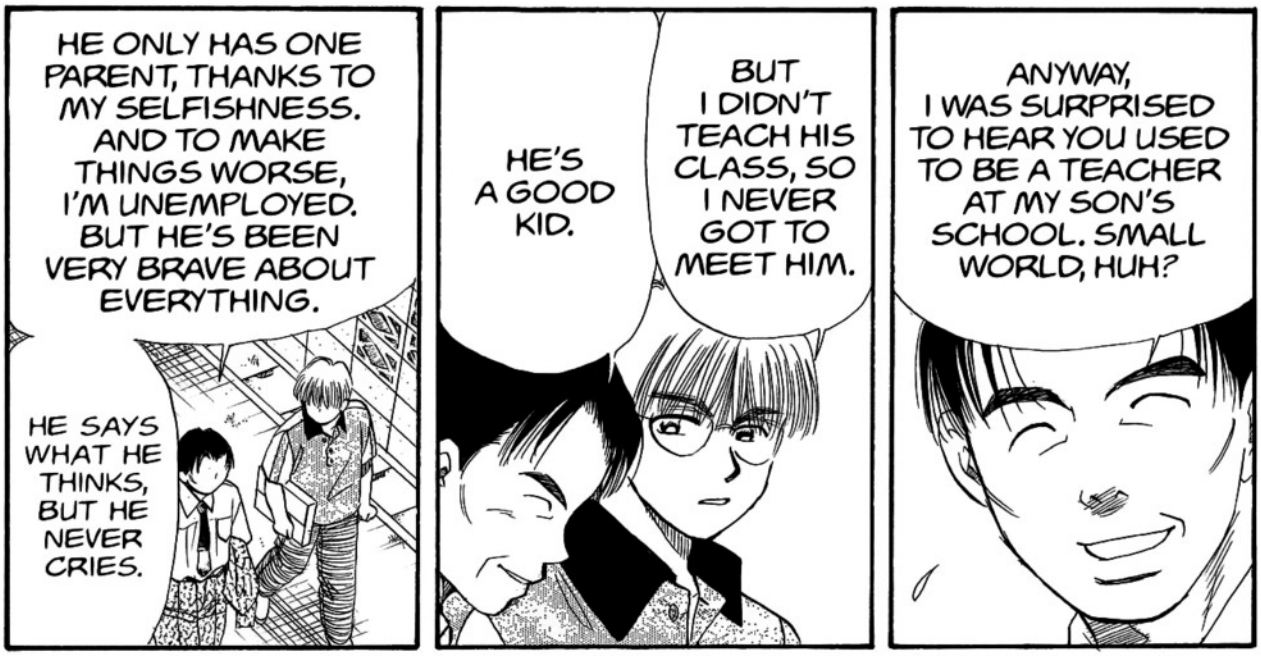

UH-OH.


THIS KID...


...
...IS NOT MY FRIEND.

I'M MEETING SOME-ONE.
ON YOUR WAY HOME, MR. MIYAMAE?
YEAH. I HAD A JOB INTERVIEW TODAY, BUT I DON'T THINK IT WENT VERY WELL.
TODAY I'M SUPPOSED TO HEAR FROM A COMPANY I HAD AN INTERVIEW WITH LAST WEEK.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN THIS NEIGHBOR-HOOD, KANNO?


HE ONLY HAS ONE PARENT, THANKS TO MY SELFISHNESS. AND TO MAKE THINGS WORSE, I'M UNEMPLOYED. BUT HE'S BEEN VERY BRAVE ABOUT EVERYTHING.
HE SAYS WHAT HE THINKS, BUT HE NEVER CRIES.

HE'S A GOOD KID.
BUT I DIDN'T TEACH HIS CLASS, SO I NEVER GOT TO MEET HIM.

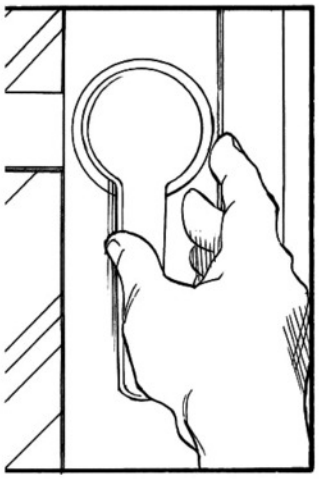
ANYWAY, I WAS SURPRISED TO HEAR YOU USED TO BE A TEACHER AT MY SON'S SCHOOL. SMALL WORLD, HUH?

YEAH.
OH...
MAYBE HE DOESN'T WANT YOU TO WORRY ABOUT HIM.

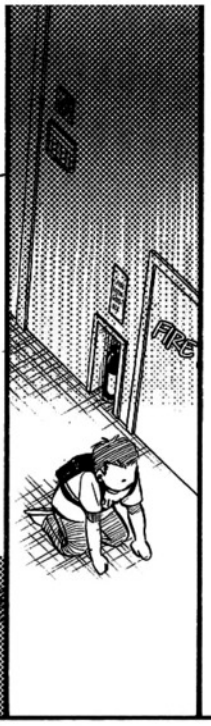
MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT.
THE MIYAMAE THAT TAKUYA KNOWS...
...MUST BE HIS SON.
HOLD THE DOOR!
WAIT!
OPEN
BEEP
CLO
HAP
CHIRP CHIRP

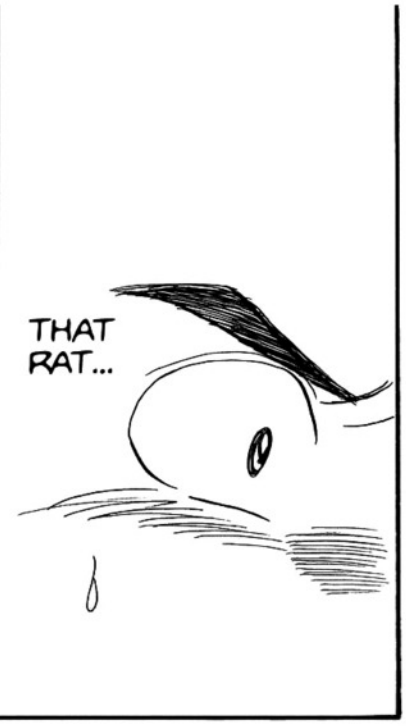
FUJII...
...MIYA-MAE.
PRESS EIGHT FOR ME...
OKAY.
HUH?
DOESN'T HE...
...LIVE ON THE THIRD FLOOR?
MWEEN
WOOSH
NG
IMP
WOOSH
WHAT'S YOUR PROB-LEM?
MWEEN
KLUNK
YOU'D BET-TER...
...CUT IT OUT!

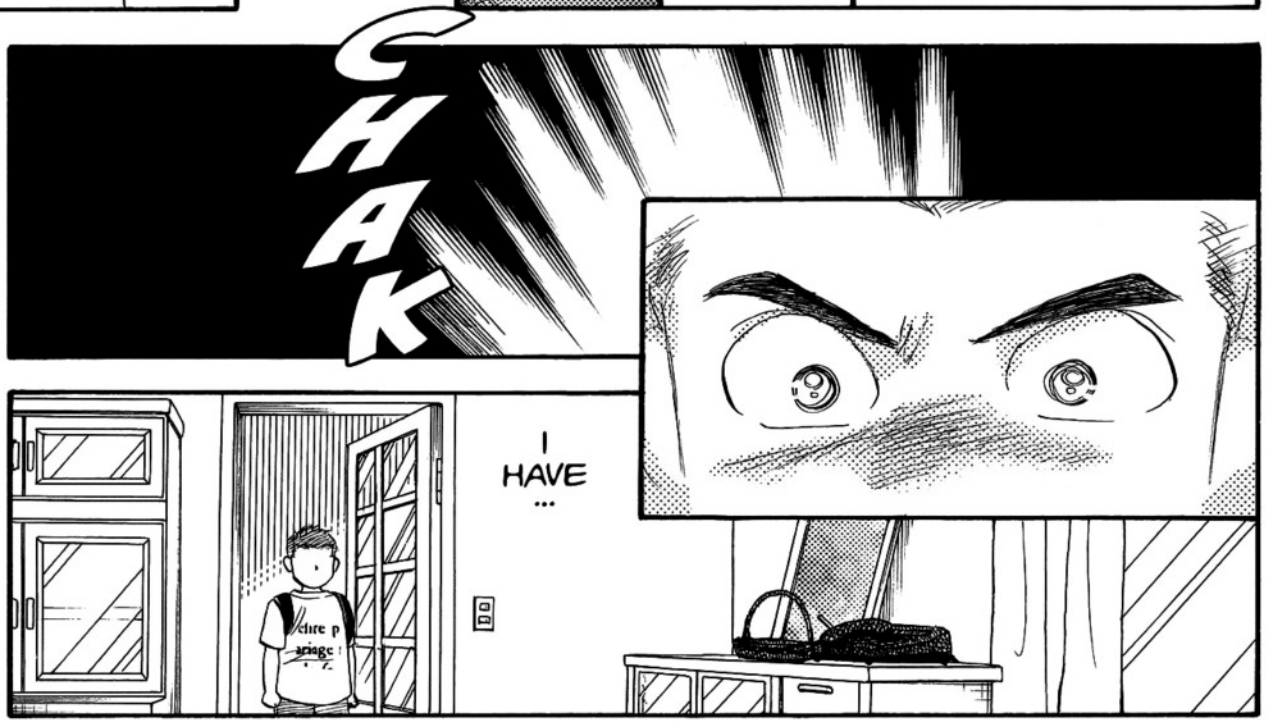
SO STOP TELLING HIM HIS BROTHER IS A BURDEN TO HIM!
CAN'T YOU SEE THEY MAKE EACH OTHER HAPPY?
I GUESS YOU WERE TRYING TO FIND SOMEBODY MORE MISERABLE THAN YOU ARE.
BUT ENOKI'S NOT THE GUY YOU WANT HIM TO BE!
MWEEN
ENOKI'S ...
...LUCKY HE HAS MINORU!
...
DING
WOOSH
WOOSH
FWUMP
KLUNK

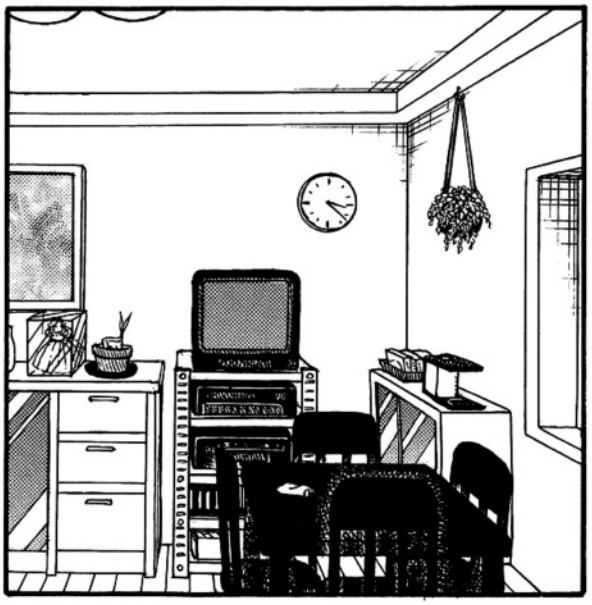


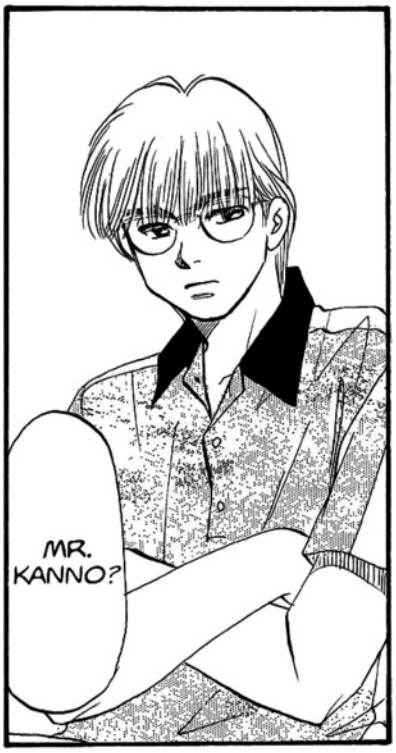
TMP
TMP
I HAVE ...


FIRE

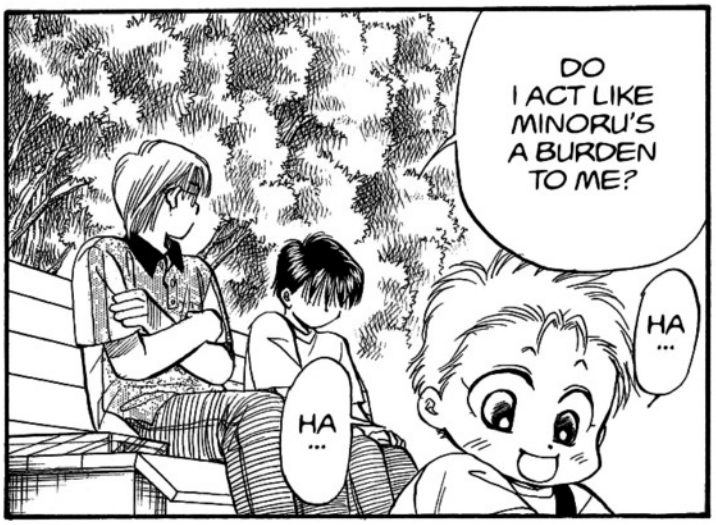

THAT RAT...


CHAK
I HAVE ...

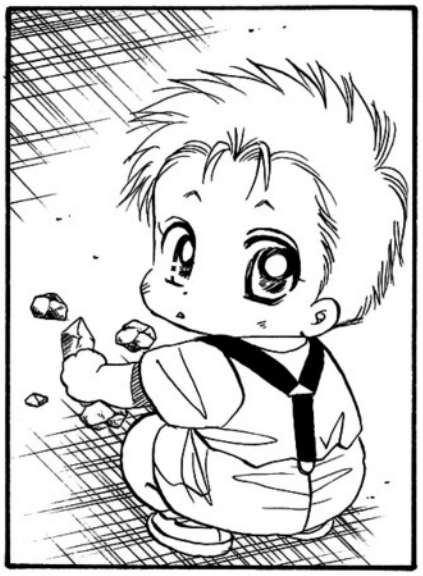



MR. KANNO?

CHIRP CHIRP


DO I ACT LIKE MINORU'S A BURDEN TO ME?
HA...
HA...

...



SWUMP

NO!
I DON'T HAVE ANYBODY!

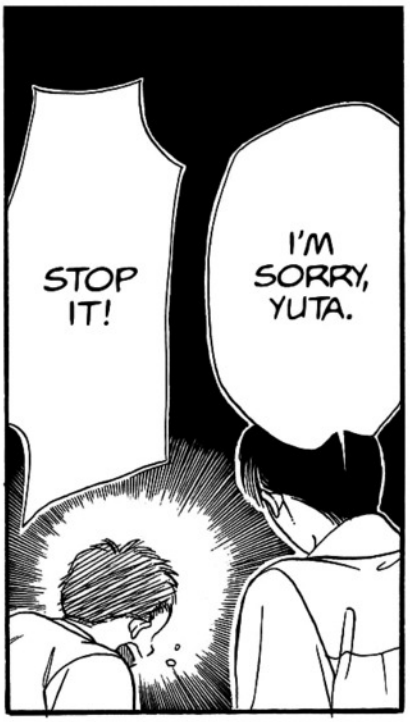
YOU? NO WAY! YOU DON'T CARE ABOUT ANYBODY!
GRRR
WHAT IS IT?
AM I A BUSYBODY?
MA-BO...
ENOKI...
WHAT'S BOTHERING YOU?
IF YOU DON'T TELL ME, I CAN'T HELP YOU.
ANYBODY CAN SEE THAT YOU LOVE YOUR BROTHER VERY MUCH.

HE ALWAYS THOUGHT OF OTHERS FIRST AND HID HIS OWN FEEINGS.
...BUT HE FELT THE WAY YOU DO.
HE DIDN'T LOOK LIKE YOU...
...OR HAVE THE SAME PROBLEMS YOU HAVE...
...
I USED TO KNOW ...
...A BOY LIKE YOU.
AND THAT'S...
PLEASE DON'T TELL MY MOM AND DAD.
MR. KANNO...
...
IT'S OKAY TO PUT YOUR OWN FEELINGS FIRST SOMETIMES.
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
...TRUE OF MIYAMAE TOO.

I'M HOME.
CHAK
YUTA?
I SAW YOUR SHOES, BUT I DIDN'T HEAR YOU, SO I THOUGHT YOU WERE...
...IN YOUR ROOM.
MIYA-MAE ...
...DOESN'T WANT TO ADMIT HOW MISER-ABLE HE IS.
THAT'S WHY HE ATTACKS YOU AND DENIES HIS OWN FEEL-INGS.
...
BUT ...
...I NEVER THOUGHT HE WAS PATHETIC.

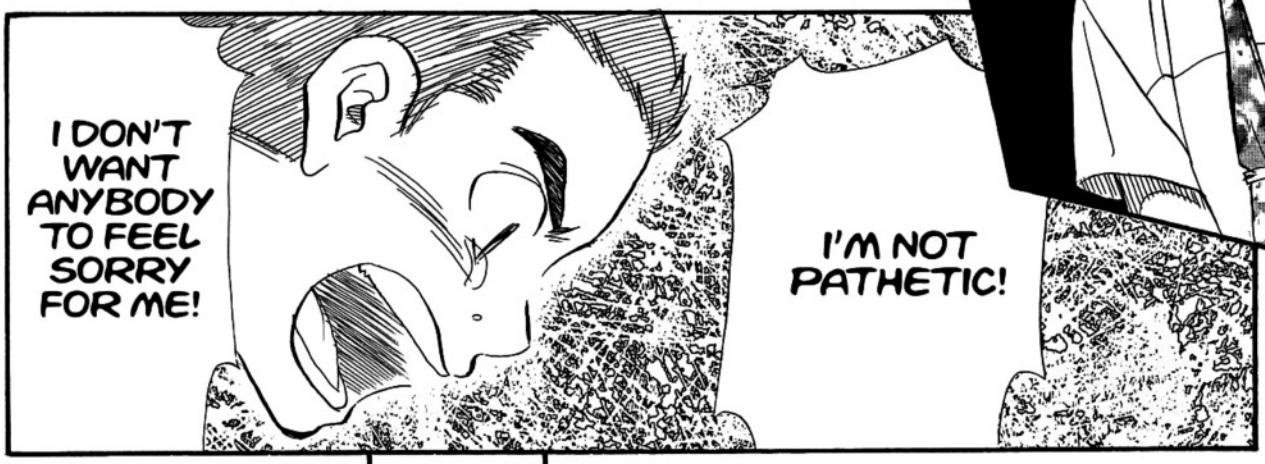
WHY DID MIYAMAE SAY THOSE MEAN THINGS TO YOU?
...IT'S HARD TO SEE ANYTHING BUT THEIR BAD POINTS.
WHEN YOU DON'T LIKE SOME-ONE...
SO LET'S THINK.
YEAH.
AND THAT'S ALL RIGHT.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO FEEL SORRY FOR HIM.
...WAS PROJECTING HIS OWN FEELINGS ONTO YOU.
HE...
YUTA...
WHAT'S WRONG ?
...BUT WE STILL HAVEN'T FIGURED OUT WHAT'S GOING ON WITH YOU.
SO MAYBE THAT'S WHAT'S GOING ON WITH HIM...
DO YOU UNDER-STAND?

A FEW DAYS AGO...
...I SAW MOM.
...
I ASKED HER...
...IF SHE'D COME BACK IF YOU FOUND A JOB.
SHE JUST SAID...
...SHE WAS SORRY.
SOB
SOB
YUTA...
YOU...
WHEN YOU...
...GOT SICK BECAUSE OF STRESS...
...WAS ANYBODY WORRIED ABOUT YOU?
MINORU ...
...AND MY DAD WERE WOR-RIED ABOUT ME.


STOP IT!
I'M SORRY, YUTA.

YOU'RE A KID. IT'S NOT YOUR JOB TO PROTECT ME.
HA HA
...DIDN'T WANT TO KNOW.
BE-CAUSE YOU...
SOB

WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME?
I GUESS YOU'VE BEEN HAVING A HARD TIME.


I DON'T WANT ANYBODY TO FEEL SORRY FOR ME!
I'M NOT PATHETIC!

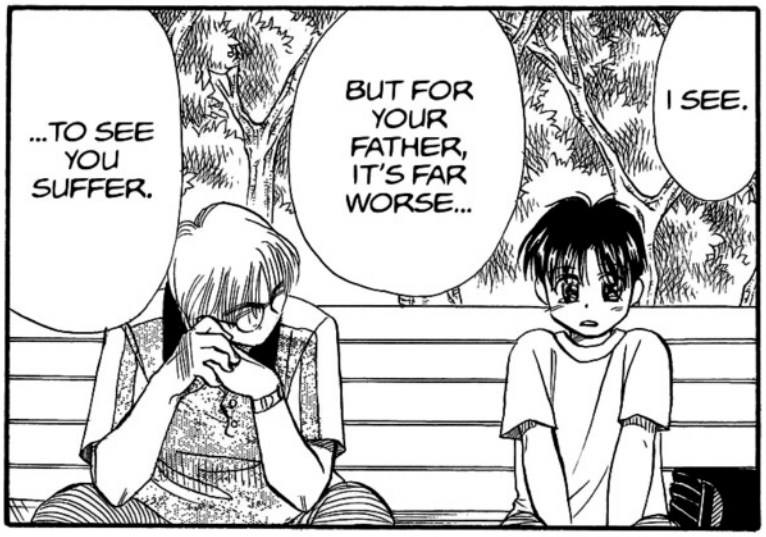
SO...
...YOU COULDN'T TELL HIM HOW YOU FELT BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T WANT TO WORRY HIM?

I...
...DON'T KNOW. BUT I NEVER WANTED YOU TO GET HURT.

DAD...
WHY DID MOM LEAVE?
WAS IT BECAUSE YOU GOT FIRED?

...THE SADNESS IN HIS EYES.
...COULDN'T STAND TO SEE ...

...I JUST ...
...TELL HIM BECAUSE ...
I COULDN'T ...

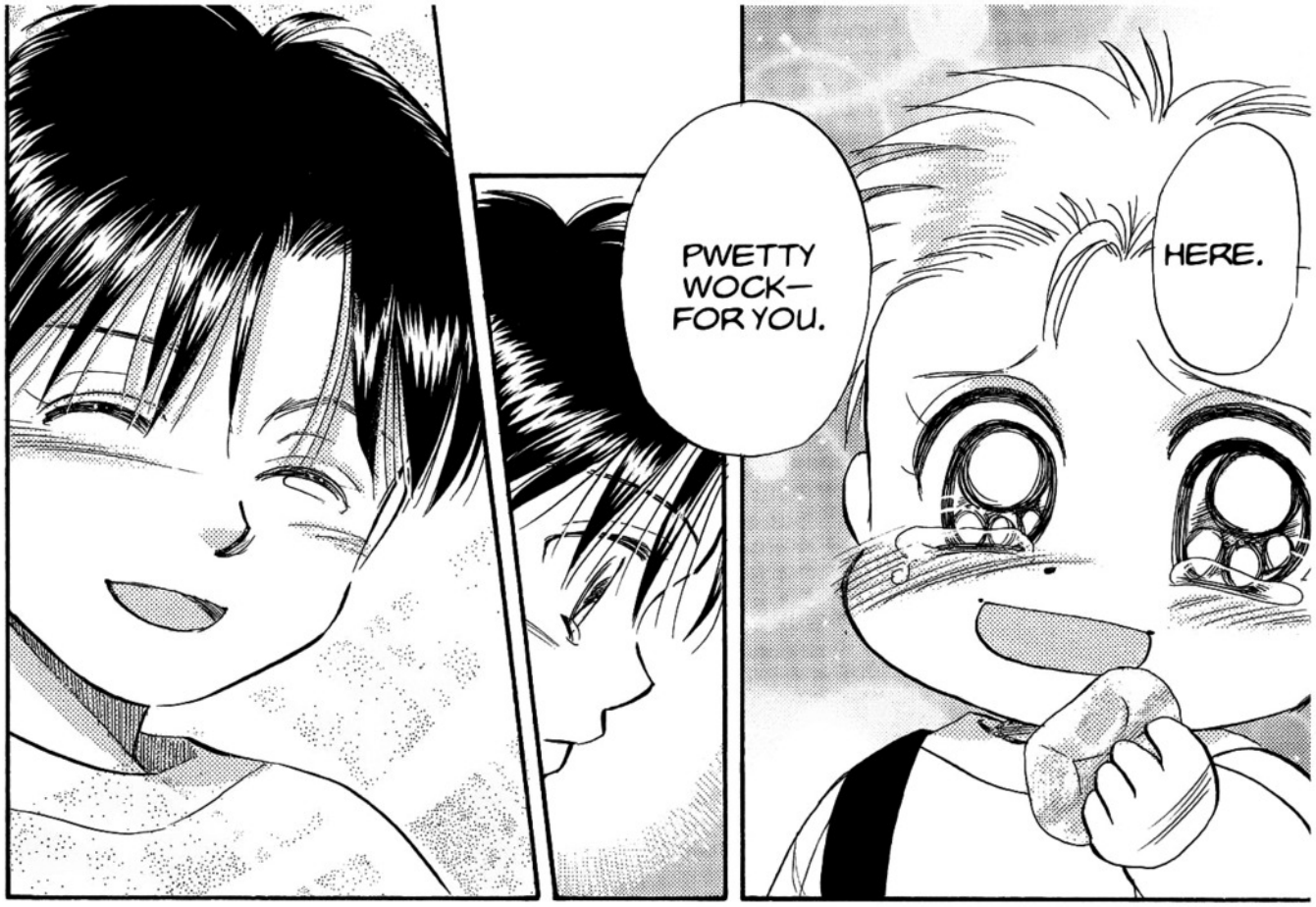

...TO SEE YOU SUFFER.
BUT FOR YOUR FATHER, IT'S FAR WORSE...
I SEE.

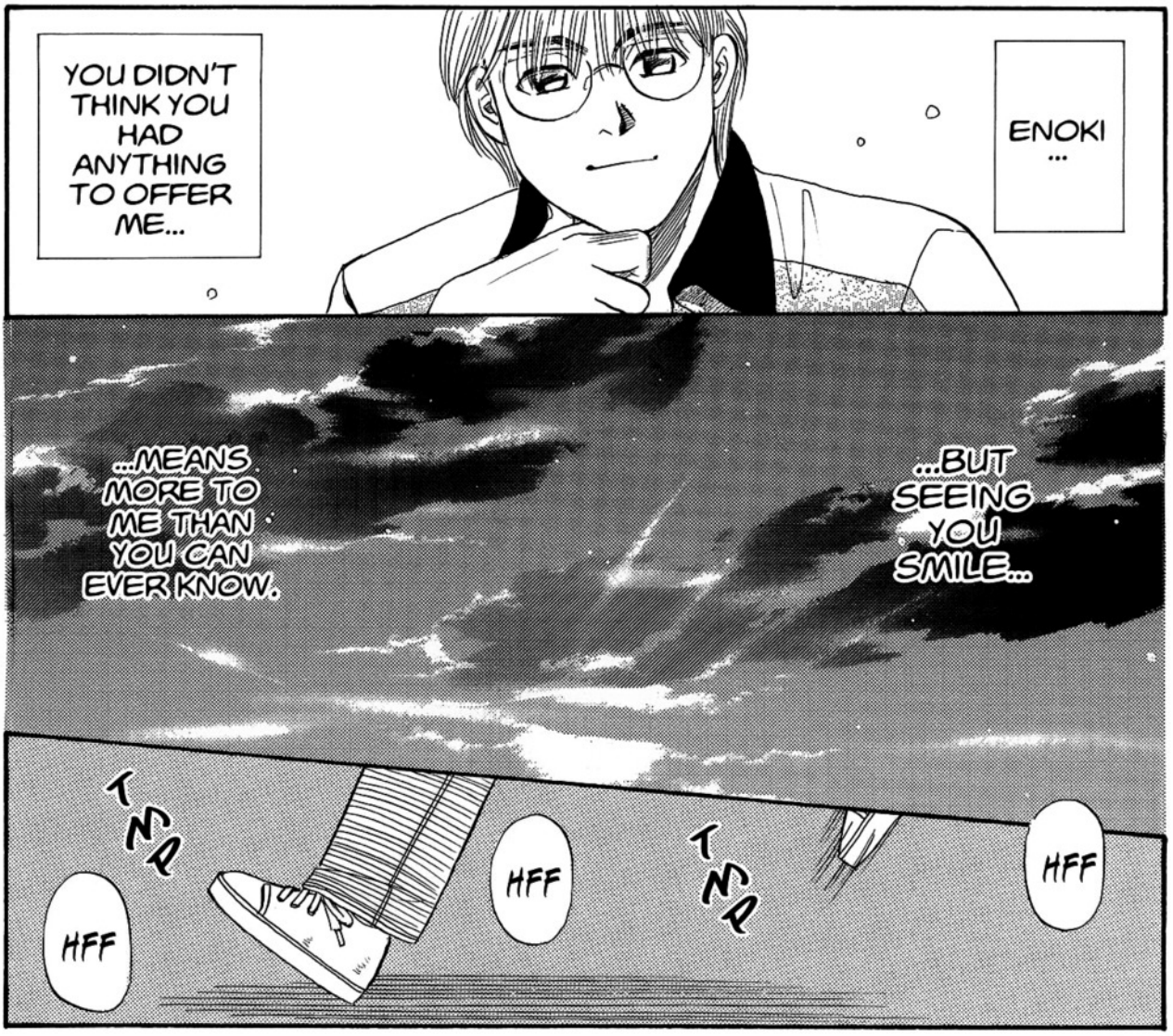
IT WAS HARD FOR US TO BE TOGETHER.
...HAD BEEN DRIFTING APART FOR A LONG TIME.

THE TRUTH IS, YOUR MOM AND I...
OVER TIME, SOMETHING CUT THE BONDS THAT CONNECTED US.

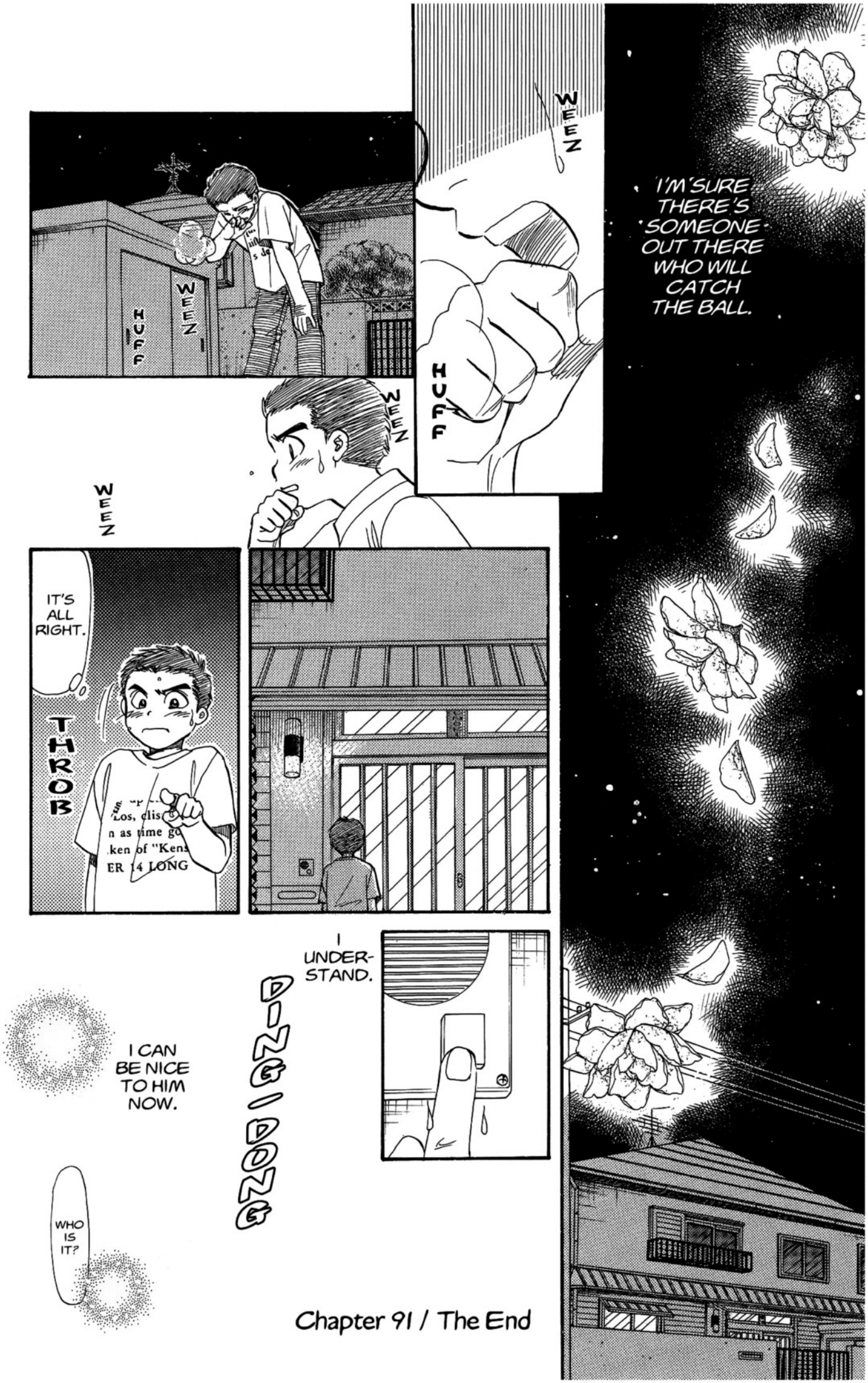
YOUR MOTHER AND I DIDN'T GET DIVORCED BECAUSE I GOT FIRED.
HOW CAN I EXPLAIN THIS?

I WANTED TO BE FRIENDS WITH HIM...
...BUT I COULDN'T AND IT MADE ME MAD AT MYSELF.
THEY MAY THROW IT BACK OR THEY MAY DROP IT.
BUT YOU HAVE TO THROW THE BALL TO FIND OUT.
YOU CAN THROW A BALL...
...BUT THE OTHER PERSON HAS TO CATCH IT.
I WANTED TO TALK ABOUT THIS STUFF WITH ENOKI.
ACTUALLY...
BUT OUR RELATIONSHIP JUST GOT MORE AND MORE OUT OF SYNCH.
...AND I'D GO OUT WITH MY CO-WORKERS.
SHE TRIED COOKING FANCY MEALS...
WE TRIED TO FIND THINGS TO FILL THE GAP.
IN SPITE OF THAT, WE HURT YOU.
...ONE THING YOUR MOTHER AND I STILL SHARE.
BUT THERE IS...
...YOU, YUTA.
THAT'S...
I'M SORRY I HAVEN'T BEEN A BETTER FATHER.
SOB
I'M SURE THERE'S SOMEONE OUT THERE WHO WILL CATCH THE BALL.
BWAZA...


PWETTY WOCK— FOR YOU.
HERE.


YOU DIDN'T THINK YOU HAD ANYTHING TO OFFER ME...
ENOKI ...
...MEANS MORE TO ME THAN YOU CAN EVER KNOW.
...BUT SEEING YOU SMILE...
TNP
HFF
HFF
TNP
HFF

DAD...
I THOUGHT ...
...ENOKI'S HOUSE WAS THIS WAY.
HFF
HFF
HFF
YES?
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
CAN I TELL YOU ABOUT IT?
OH?
WELL...
A LOT OF THINGS HAVE HAPPENED TO ME LATELY.



Chapter 91 / The End